

DN disabilitynow

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New Deal probe

MPs look set to probe a national scheme, which aims to find disabled people work, after mounting concerns about its performance.

The news comes after one provider went bust, amid accusations that the government failed to promote the scheme properly. Funding based on clients first finding work may have contributed to this.

The national New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP), launched in July 2001, was part of a plan to help 5,000 people on incapacity benefits find work by the end of March. By June, it had helped only 4,000 people. NDDP's overall target is 90,000 jobs over three years.

Now a disability employment charity Outset has gone bust after its biggest ever recruitment drive to employ 60 staff to deliver the NDDP.

Martin Aaron, senior partner at corporate consultants Sterling Ford, which is dealing

with the liquidation, said: "I believe that NDDP was a major contributory factor to the failure of the charity."

Less than 600 people registered for the Outset scheme, and the initial outlay would have swallowed the first installments of NDDP funding, he said. Outset had expected far more clients to come forward.

The government said Outset had been given more cash help once it got into problems.

A spokesperson added: "It was always made clear that marketing to potential customers would be the prime responsibility of Outset and all other job brokers."

But Archy Kirkwood, Liberal Democrat chairman of the Commons' Work and Pensions Select Committee, said it had

already heard evidence about shortcomings with the NDDP, and he expected the committee to carry out an investigation into NDDP and disability employment in the next 12 months.

Shaw Trust has highlighted difficulties with 98 per cent of funding being paid only when people find work and some providers treating NDDP as an add-on to other schemes.

Mr Kirkwood said: "We cannot now avoid revisiting the question of how we help people who have disabilities into work."

A report just published by the committee says most disabled people on Incapacity Benefit (IB) should face compulsory, annual, job focussed interviews. But these should be independent of any benefit assessments, so people do not fear losing IB.



Flag day: David Abrutat, who is paraplegic, was welcomed back to the Tower of London by members of The Royal British Legion after a marathon 3,200 mile, 87 day handcycle circumnavigation of Britain. He was recruiting blood donors and raising money for the legion.

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Classy Massie

Disability Rights Commission chair Bert Massie took part in the organisation's first awareness-raising Disability Rights Day on 15 August. Pictured on DN's cover, Massie poses with a disabled mannequin in the window of fashion retailer Arc, in Manchester.

Landmark law

New laws aimed at stopping schools, colleges and universities from discriminating against disabled people came into effect this month.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act, now updated by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA), education providers must not treat disabled students less favourably. They must also make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students are not substantially disadvantaged. See DN's 12-page education supplement for more on SENDA.

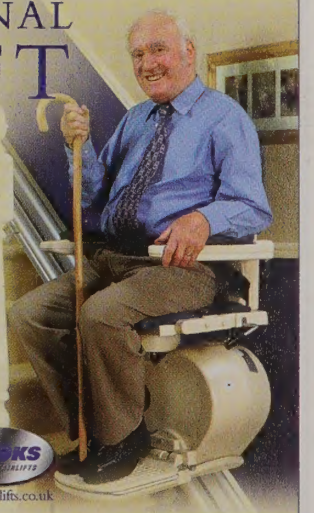
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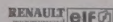
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One step back

The government has backtracked on plans to improve standards in care homes for disabled and elderly people.

A consultation document published in August contains plans for pre-existing homes to be exempted from many physical standards. Older homes providing less than 17.1 square metres of living and communal space for wheelchair users under the age of 65 will be exempted, as will older homes providing under 10 square metres of living space for older people. The standards also backtrack on the number of people who have to share a toilet or bathroom and the width of doors. New homes will have to meet the standards.

Anne Parker, chair of the

National Care Standards Commission (NCSC), which will be responsible for enforcing the standards, said: "The hard-core of providers, who've let the sector down over many years by delivering poor standards to their residents, may take comfort, sit back, and then do nothing to bring their facilities up to a decent standard."

Simon Denigri, assistant chief executive at the Alzheimer's Society, said: "We have always campaigned very hard to have minimum standards across the board. It is important to have a level playing field."

But Health Secretary Alan Milburn said the move was aimed to help ensure good homes did not face closure.

Dissent over dismissal

The disabled people's movement faces a damaging split after the sacking of the director of the National Centre for Independent Living (NCIL).

Mystery surrounds the dismissal of Frances Hasler, who was sacked after researching the possibility of a new, independent organisation to run the Centre.

NCIL is currently a division of the British Council of Disabled People (BCODP), although it is largely government funded. It plays a vital role in the direct payments scheme, which gives disabled people money to pay for personal assistance.

Hasler is believed to have prepared briefing papers on the idea

of a separate organisation at the request of BCODP's Independent Living Committee (ILC).

Her supporters are particularly angry that on 10 August, three weeks after her dismissal, BCODP's national council agreed to create a new, independent organisation to run NCIL.

She said: "I am appealing against my dismissal, which I believe was wholly unfair."

Andy Rickell, chief executive of BCODP, said: "It is a matter of discipline and someone's contract of employment."

"People understand that this is a difficult situation and we are attempting to do the best in the circumstances. BCODP's

name might not be so good in some quarters, because people feel we have done the wrong thing, but we have an obligation to be democratic, and we are an organisation, and an organisation has rules."

Nick Danagher, co-chair of the ILC, who was suspended by BCODP for his role in the independence discussions, said the committee was "surprised" and "dismayed" by the council's actions. He and Hasler are believed to have the backing of the entire ILC, who were also briefly suspended over the row.

BCODP's national conference will debate NCIL's future, 12-13 October.

Support for campaign

DN readers have backed a new campaign to persuade the airline industry to stop wrecking their wheelchairs.

In a survey*, they have described how their holidays and business trips have been ruined by loss or damage to their equipment by airlines and baggage handlers. The campaign, supported by DN, has been launched by Phil Friend, director of disability training consultants Churchill and Friend.

June Brock, of Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire, who has had both a wheelchair and a scooter

badly damaged on flights, said: "I won't go on an aeroplane now, because I am scared of what they are going to do."

And actress Julie Fernandez, who has also had her wheelchair damaged while flying, said: "I'll support anything that makes people who work in the airline industry treat us a little better."

Friend said: "If disabled people want to be fully included in society, we have to be able to travel and we have to be able to travel without worrying about our equipment being smashed."

*To take part, tel: 020 7619 7323, or visit our website: www.disabilitynow.org.uk



Scottish reel: Sheffield angler Danny Peet enjoys his first prize of a week's fly-fishing on Scotland's River Doon. He was the winner of a competition run by disability toilet equipment manufacturer Clos-o-Mat. Entry forms for next year's competition are available at www.clos-o-mat.com

In brief

It's safer inside

Thousands of blind and partially sighted people have given up going out alone because of the fear of injury when travelling, according to a new report*.

The Royal National Institute of the Blind called for improved safety for visually impaired people who travel by bus, train or on foot.

**Travellers' Tales*, £5 from RNIB customer services on 0845 702 3153.

TV eye

A new text entry system could make computing easier for disabled people who cannot use a normal keyboard.

The Dasher system, designed by scientists at Cambridge University's department of physics, uses a camera to build up words by tracking where the user is looking on screen.

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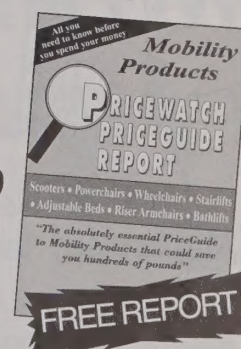
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Douglas Campbell OBE –
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ChairSafe is quickly and easily attached to the vehicle ramp in its travelling position and the wheelchair is safely secured against its cushioned body. The padded head restraint helps protect the passenger from potentially serious whiplash injuries. We think it's a small engineering miracle and we're not alone...



“As well as feeling more assured about my safety, if I were a regular passenger of a Gowrings Mobility vehicle, I would buy ChairSafe for the added comfort it gave me.

By launching this product Gowrings have set down a challenge to other manufacturers of wheelchair accessible vehicles to meet the genuine safety needs of users.”



Douglas Campbell OBE –
Executive Director, Disabled
Drivers Association (DDA)

“ChairSafe is a brilliant idea and will protect the most vulnerable passenger. The idea of incorporating a head restraint to prevent whiplash is an excellent concept.”

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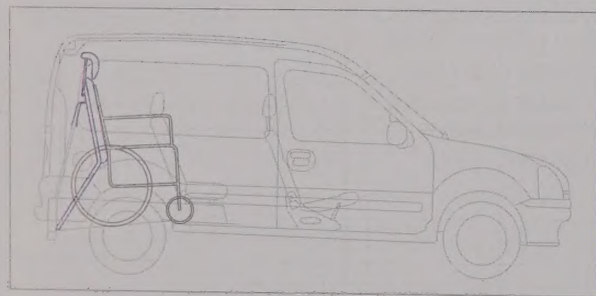
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Plants stole parking spaces!



A supermarket turned disabled parking bays into a garden centre by covering them with plants and flowerpots.

Disabled customers were appalled to find that three of the spaces at the Asda store in Kendal, Cumbria, had been moved 20 yards further away and replaced with a mini-market garden.

One Asda customer, Dave Forknall, from Sedbergh, Cumbria, who has multiple sclerosis, said: "I think it's atrocious. To actually replace those bays with seasonal produce just

says that they do not care about disabled shoppers."

Asda, Sainsbury, Safeway and Tesco have all pledged to work with members of the Baywatch campaign, including DN, which aims to tackle the abuse of disabled parking bays.

An Asda spokesman said the market garden would be removed within three days.

He said the decision to use the spaces had been taken "to display seasonal produce".

He said: "They provided alternative spaces which were about 20 yards further away. The spaces will not be used in this way again."



Social care slating

The government has been accused of ignoring the needs of disabled people after unveiling plans to improve social care for older people.

The plans, announced by Health Secretary, Alan Milburn, in July, include giving direct payments to all elderly people to allow them to buy the care and equipment they need at home.

The plans also include easier access to community equipment, such as hoists and handrails. These are to be free, and 500,000 extra items will be provided.

Direct payments are already

available to provide care for disabled people. But Neil Betteridge, head of public policy and campaigns at Arthritis Care, said: "The equipment we are talking about, and the things you could pay for with direct payments, are things you could need whether you are 16 or 60. There is no evidence they are thinking about disabled people."

The move is aimed to help stop bed-blocking by elderly people in hospital. By 2006, an extra £1bn will be spent on social services for older people, Mr Milburn said.

He also said that by the end

of 2004, home assessments of elderly people will begin within 48 hours of referral and be completed within a month, with any equipment provided within a week.

Meanwhile, the House of Commons' Health Committee has condemned plans for local authorities to be made to pay for the care of elderly people stuck in hospital if they are well enough to be discharged. Chairman David Hinchliffe said the plans would be divisive; health and social services need to work together on the issue.

In brief

Witcher steps in

Sally Witcher, a freelance consultant, researcher and trainer, and former director of the Child Poverty Action Group, has become chair of the government's new disability employment advisory committee.

A former campaign worker for the charity Disability Alliance, she took up the post on 5 August.

The committee will advise the Department for Work and Pensions on the barriers to employment faced by disabled people.

It will also advise on Jobcentre Plus programmes.

BDA gets new chair

The British Deaf Association, the UK's largest national deaf charity run by deaf people, has elected Doug Alker as its new chair and Alan Murray as vice chair. More than 1,000 members of the charity voted in the elections.

New apprenticeship

Disability charity Leonard Cheshire has launched the UK's first Modern Apprenticeship in the disability care sector.

The scheme is aimed at people over 18 interested in a career in care. The charity hopes this will help counter a national shortage of care workers.

www.leonard-cheshire.org.uk or tel: 01902 895632

NICE needs your advice

Disability charities have cautiously welcomed plans to recruit "ordinary members of the public" to help the government's medical advice body decide which drugs should be prescribed on the NHS.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is looking for 30 people* from England and Wales to join its new Citizens Council (CC).

They will be paid £150 a day for up to six days of work a year.

NICE says the CC will provide "a backdrop of public opinion" to prepare guidance on the clinical and cost-effectiveness of treatment and care for the NHS.

Arthritis Care, Cancer Research UK and the Royal National Institute of the Blind all said the CC could, if set up in the right way, provide a useful voice for disabled people.

*To apply, call Vision 21 on 0161 8390385, e-mail: rt@visiontwentyone.net or visit www.nice.org.uk

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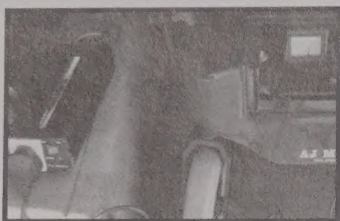
We have a winner!

John Marsden (*left*), of Ashton-in-Makerfield, has won a FREERIDER Companion scooter in a wordsearch competition jointly run by DN and FREERIDER.

The scooter, worth £1,295, is small and compact enough to fit in any small car.

Just proves it's worth entering those DN competitions!

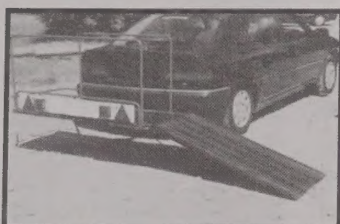
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It's illegal, Eagle

The government department responsible for disability rights has been fined for discriminating against a deaf man.

Alistair Appleby, 37, brought the case after he was humiliated at a benefits office in 1999. The Blackfriars Benefits Agency office refused his request for an interview without a glass partition screen to allow him to lip-read.

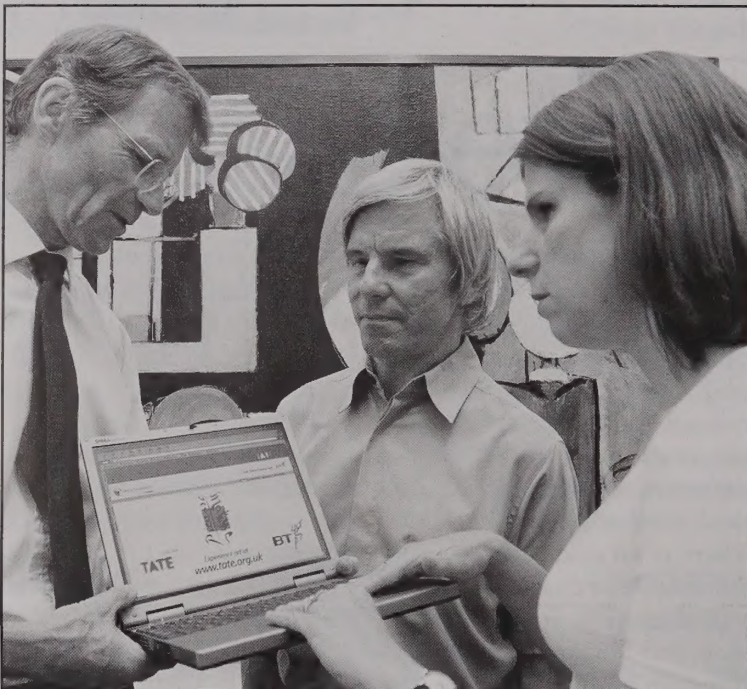
Lambeth County Court ruled that the office had breached the Disability Discrimination Act and ordered the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to pay damages of £850. The

DWP, where Maria Eagle is Minister for Disabled People, was formed last year, taking over responsibility for benefits at the same time.

Mr Appleby, who was backed by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, said: "I felt belittled and humiliated by the way I was treated."

A spokesman for the DWP said that with the the current roll-out of Jobcentre Plus, which is replacing benefits offices, most services are being offered without screens.

He added: "Mr Appleby's experience is certainly the exception, not the rule."



Art in sight: Tate director Sir Nicholas Serota (*left*) shows i-Map, a new, modern art website for visually impaired people,* to Voldi Gailans and Isabella Murdoch, who are visually impaired. The site was created by the Tate Modern art gallery. * www.tate.org.uk/imap

Drug delay

People coming off a medical cannabis trial could face a two year wait for cannabis-based drugs unless they can obtain synthetic versions from the USA.

Even if trials are successful, cannabis-based medicines will probably not be licensed for use in the UK until 2004.

But some people with multiple sclerosis have already finished their involvement in the Cannabinoids in Multiple Sclerosis (CAMS) trial.

And the CAMS team failed to secure funding for an extension to the study that would allow them to continue providing drugs to those people who completed the main trial.

Although results of the study will not be known until next year, Dr John Zajicek, one of the principal trial investigators, is now exploring ways of enabling patients to receive medication outside the clinical trial.

The US company which manufactures the synthetic cannabinoid drug Marinol has been asked to consider ways in which it might be supplied to patients who finish the trial and think the drug might ease their condition.

Campaign continues



The new Work and Pensions Secretary Andrew Smith has rejected calls to extend

the £200 winter fuel payment to disabled people.

The move came as the influential Commons' Trade and Industry Select Committee prepared to publish its report into fuel poverty in September.

The committee of MPs took evidence from various groups, including DN and campaign group energywatch, calling for the payments to be extended.

DN wants the payment to be given to severely disabled people of working age on the middle or higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance, or the higher rate of the mobility component of the allowance.

Pensioner households already get the payment. Extending it to disabled people would cost about £340m.

But in a letter to DN editor Mary Wilkinson, Mr Smith reiterated the government's position that the payments would not be extended. He responded after being sent a copy of DN's submission to the committee.

Mary Wilkinson said: "Disabled people face another winter in inadequately heated homes. The campaign goes on."



If you would like to learn more about BP, please telephone our Distribution Services on 0870 241 3269 for a free copy of our audio cassette which gives highlights from our Annual Report 2001.

Charity chiefs step down Speaking out

Disability charities Scope and the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) have both announced that their chief executives are to quit their jobs.

The news that James Strachan, RNID chief executive, is to replace David Livermore as chairman of the organisation by 2003 has sparked anger amongst some members of the deaf community at the manner of his appointment.

A complaint has been made to the Charity Commission, but Brian Lamb, director of communications at RNID, said

that the charity had acted fully within its constitution.

A new chief executive is expected to be appointed this year. Once Strachan resigns, he will be co-opted onto the board without having to be elected and will be made chair.

Lamb said: "The membership appoint the board and the board appoint the chair. So the membership are involved."

Meanwhile, Richard Brewster, Scope chief executive, plans to leave for the USA in February 2003.

Disability groups are waiting

to see if either charity appoints a disabled chief executive as a replacement.

A spokesperson for Scope said it would consult widely across the organisation about the type of person needed for the job. Adverts will appear in a wide range of publications, including *Disability Now*.

She said: "The efforts are about getting out to as diverse an audience as possible, who may have the skills that are relevant, and making sure we take into consideration the views of our membership."

Psychiatrists will refuse to cooperate if the government forces through plans to increase compulsory treatment of people with mental health problems.

Members of the Critical Psychiatry Network (CPN) made the pledge at a protest in Whitehall against the government's draft Mental Health Bill.

They are particularly concerned about measures allowing compulsory treatment in the community and detaining people with serious mental health problems against their wishes.

Dr Phil Thomas, co-chair of CPN, said he believed a majority of psychiatrists would refuse to implement these proposals.

The protest on 12 August was organised by the Critical Mental Health Forum, a group of service users, academics and professionals.

Wendy Lee, a service user from Archway, London, said: "We feel very angry that the government is not listening to service users."

Meanwhile, opposition to the government's plans continues to grow – with the Law Society and the Royal College of Psychiatrists the latest to oppose the draft bill.

And mental health charities have questioned the positive picture of services portrayed by the first star ratings for mental health hospitals and trusts.

Only 15 trusts received one or no stars for their performance, compared with 71 awarded two or three.

A Department of Health spokeswoman said that the ratings were only "indicative" and would be more accurate next year.

Handy, high-tech and helpful



A robotics company has received a £75,000 grant to develop a robot to perform tasks for disabled people.

The Shadow Robot Company (SRC) said it will be programmed to carry out a "wide variety" of jobs, such as fetching a glass of water. It will have a "hand" and "arm" and be remote controlled, but will perform some tasks automatically.

The project has been given an Invention and Innovation award by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

Mark Wordsall, a member of SRC, who has spinal muscular atrophy, said: "I look forward to having something that will help me when carers and friends are not around."



Fight for rights: Protesters (left to right) Dr Philip Thomas, Brian Channel and Liz Hills in Whitehall on 12 August

In brief

MPs call for funds

More than three in five MPs believe the government should spend more to rehabilitate people with acquired brain injuries, according to a new survey.

And more than 80 per cent of Labour MPs questioned for the research for the brain injury charity Rehab UK say that the lack of services for such people needs to be urgently reviewed.

New ratings scheme

Tourism bosses are to introduce new access standards for hotels, guest houses and self-catering accommodation across the UK.

The new National Accessible Scheme (NAS) will include ratings for mobility, visual and hearing impairments.

It will be launched to consumers later this year by the tourist boards of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The NAS will replace an existing scheme, which only covers mobility.

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Animal magic: volunteers for the award-winning VOCAL scheme

Reaping recognition

A project supporting people with learning disabilities doing voluntary work has scooped a prestigious government Health and Social Care Award.

The annual national awards recognise services and individuals who promote excellence in the field.

The CSV VOCAL scheme at Downham Market, Norfolk, won the Promoting Independence Award, for helping learning disabled people do voluntary work in playgroups, schools, homes for elderly people, a farm and a museum.

Lynne Fuller, VOCAL project manager, said: "The recognition of the volunteers for their work is amazing. It shows they can make a contribution

and it is important socially for them."

There were 16 awards. All winning schemes got £10,000 to invest in their projects.

Christopher Chambers, team manager at the Adult Community Mental Health Team of the Somerset Partnership NHS and Social Care Trust in Yeovil, scooped the Outstanding Achiever (Social Care) Award.

And a children's services award went to the Inter Agency Link Team, Hull and East Riding Community Health (NHS) Trust in partnership with Hull Social Services. The team has provided integrated services for youngsters with emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties.

You're able floats

Disability internet group You'reable has become the first disability website to float on the stock market.

And using shares to pay for them, the company has also taken over two equipment firms, Scootermart and Ortho-Kinetics. Products can be bought through the site.

The company floated as Bright Futures Group PLC on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) in August.

Shares initially sold at 20p each and the group, including the mobility companies, is now valued at £6.7 million.

The group also offered five per cent of its shares for sale

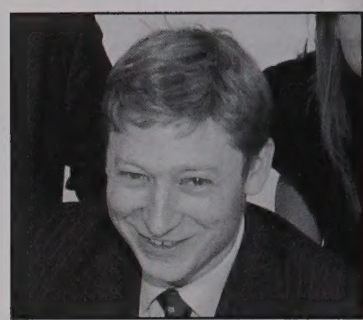
privately prior to flotation and has raised £485,000 after costs.

Ben Hunt, IT correspondent at the *Financial Times*, said that, in general, it was "an appalling climate to be launching on the stock market".

But he added: "The fact that they can raise money suggests someone has a lot of faith in the business."

The group might benefit from cornering a niche market, he said.

Stephen Harpin (*above right*), chief executive of the Bright Futures Group, said: "All the shares we have offered for sale have been fully subscribed. We've had a very



successful flotation."

Harpin aims to create a large company capable of reducing equipment prices in ways he claims small companies cannot.

"This is something that we are doing to meet a huge customer demand for low-price disability equipment," he said. www.you'reable.com

Baltic's access blow

Disabled visitors to a major new arts gallery say they are appalled at how inaccessible it is.

The Baltic centre, developed by Gateshead Council, has attracted more than 130,000 visitors since it opened in July.

But disabled visitors have pointed out problems, including access to the café, the design of some disabled toilets, heavy doors, signs and colour schemes.

Denise Knott, of Disability

Action North-East (DANE), said: "We have got a brilliant facility which is great for the north-east, a venue which should be 100 per cent accessible, and it is just another example of ignorance, exclusion and marginalisation of disabled people."

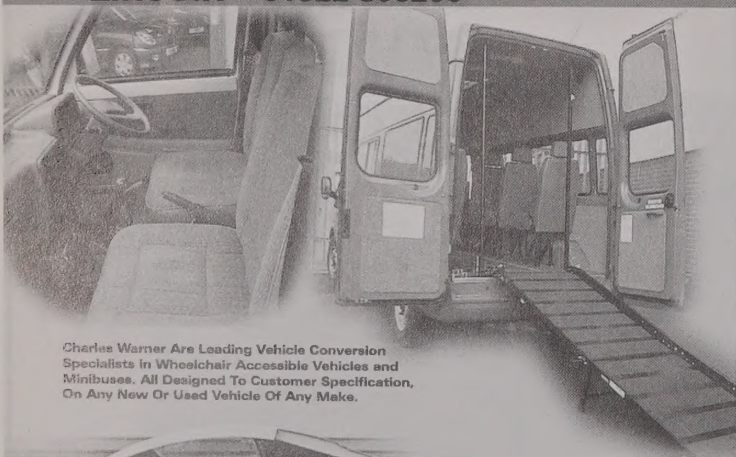
Jerry Barford, of Gateshead Council, said it would continue to make "minor adjustments" in response to the inevitable "teething problems".

He said "a respected local disabled access firm" worked on the project and accessibility was "well above the national standards expected of such a new building".

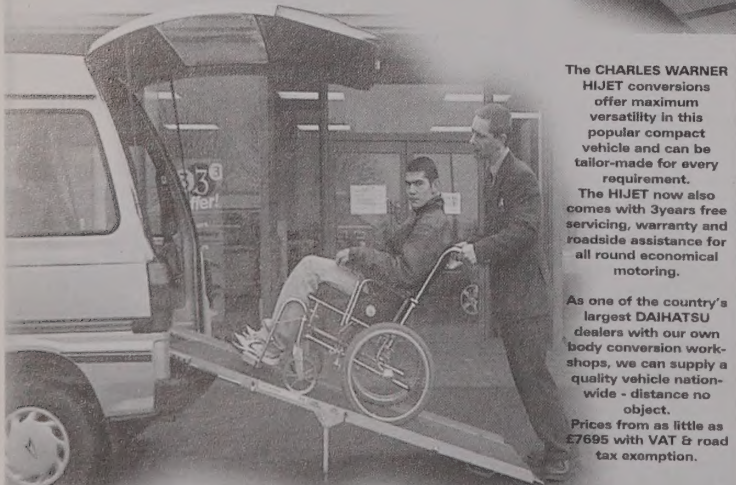
But Jo Wilson, marketing and development manager at Baltic, which was not responsible for the building work, said: "Baltic is aware of the access issues that have been raised and we share the concerns."

Charles Warner
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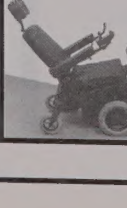
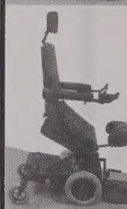
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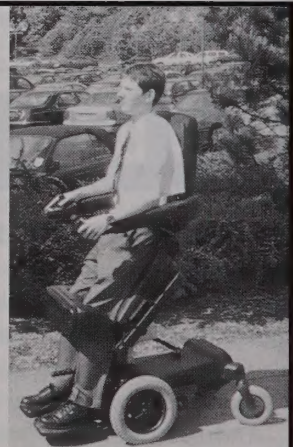
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News review

DN rounds up news covered in the main-stream media over the last few weeks

Ops abroad

A scheme that tackles NHS waiting lists by allowing people to travel abroad for operations is to be made available nationally.

The announcement followed a pilot scheme in which people travelled to France and Germany for cataract, hip or knee surgery.

A Department of Health spokesperson said: "Treating patients overseas will remain one of the options open to NHS bodies seeking to reduce waiting times."

But she added that the preference would always be to treat people within the UK and bring in doctors from abroad if necessary.

Drugs denied

Three-quarters of men with angina and two-thirds of men who have had heart attacks are not getting vital drugs to prevent further heart attacks and strokes, researchers found.

Despite proven benefits of cholesterol lowering drugs (CLDs), including statins, too few men get them, according to the British Heart Foundation (BHF), which funded the research.

The study, based at St George's Hospital, London, looked at 3,700 men.

Recent research also funded by BHF found that statins could reduce the risk of heart attacks and stroke by one-third in such men.

No to screening

A couple were refused permission to have embryo screening allowing a new baby to provide a match for a bone marrow transplant for their seriously ill son.

Jayson and Michelle Whitaker wanted to have a baby which had been tested to check it could provide the match for their son Charlie, three, who has Diamond-Blackfan anaemia (DBA). But the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority said screening could only be used when the embryo itself was at risk of DBA, and, in this case, that was unlikely.

First ever study

The government has commissioned a disability charity to help prepare for the first ever national survey of people with learning disabilities. The survey will provide information on how people with learning disabilities view their lives and the services they receive.

Central England People First (CEPF), which is run by people

with learning disabilities, will carry out an initial feasibility study for the survey. It will work with the firm BMRB Social Research and the University of Lancaster.

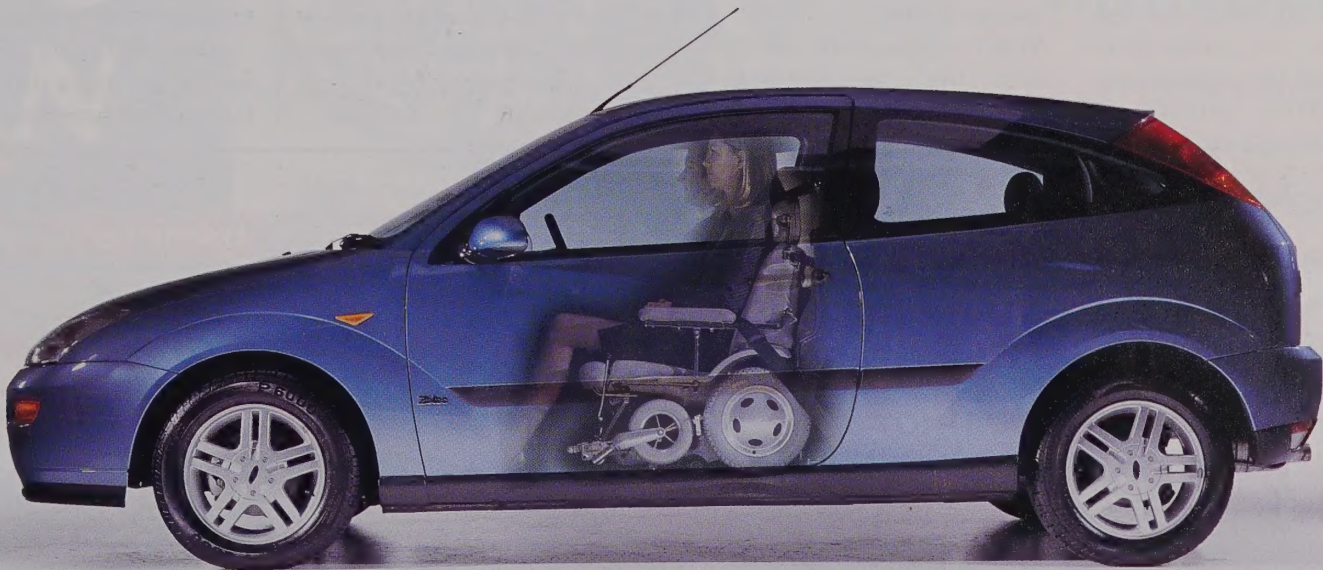
Ian Davies, of CEPF, said: "I think it is a really exciting and positive move for an organisation like us to be involved."



Sense of success: Richard Mason (left), who has a learning disability, and Matthew Birch complete a new sensory garden in Brighton, created by Care Co-ops and Southdown Housing Association.



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and its occupant into the position where the front seat would normally be located. To suit different disability needs, CarChair is available with a range of accessories and in four options from attendant pushchair to fully powered wheel retraction.

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Stroke failure

Over 6,000 people a year die and another 6,500 are disabled unnecessarily because there are not enough specialist stroke units, a report has claimed.

The Royal College of Physicians' third national stroke audit found only 27 per cent of stroke patients spent most of their hospital stay in a stroke unit in 2001/2002, just two per cent higher than in 1999/2000. And only 36 per cent of stroke patients spent

any time in a specialist unit.

But there has been an increase in the number of stroke units. Nearly three in four general hospitals now have units, compared with 45 per cent in 1998/1999.

Margaret Goose, chief executive of The Stroke Association, said stroke care was moving forward "at a snail's pace".

She said: "Although there is a government target to improve stroke services and the evidence

shows that treatment in a stroke unit saves lives and reduces disability, we are really disappointed that still nearly three-quarters of stroke patients do not get this life saving care."

• The Stroke Association has linked up with Rotary International to raise awareness of stroke and raise funds. The partnership will include a Blood Pressure Check Day next April.



Wired up: John Bond, from Lenham, Kent, who was disabled after an accident in 1998, is taking part in a trial at the National Rehabilitation Centre for the Paralysed. It is examining if use of electro-therapy could lead to muscle growth and more function in paralysed limbs.

Implant risk alert HRT probe

People who have cochlear implants could be at an increased risk of contracting bacterial meningitis, a government health body has warned.

The Department of Health is now recommending that all people with implants or those about to have them fitted should be vaccinated.

The warning by the Medical Devices Agency (MDA) followed new statistics showing 25 cases of meningitis and nine deaths worldwide out of 60,000 adults and

children fitted with implants.

But Dr Pat Troop, deputy chief medical officer, said there had been only one suspected case out of the 3,300 people fitted with implants in the UK.

A spokesperson for the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) said the risk was small, but the charity told parents of children with cochlear implants still to be "extra vigilant".

NDCS helpline: 0808 800 8880. NHS Direct, tel: 0845 4647, text: 0845 6064647.

A government-funded health body is to set up an independent committee to investigate the risks of hormone replacement therapy.

The Medical Research Council (MRC) is to review the results of US and British studies, after concerns over the risks of long-term use of the therapy.

But the MRC has decided not to halt the £20 million Women's International Study of Long Duration Oestrogen after Menopause, which it is part funding.

£800k boost for MS care

A disability charity is backing about 20 new specialist nurse positions around the UK to help prescribe recently approved drugs for multiple sclerosis (MS).

The Multiple Sclerosis Society and three drugs manufacturers are providing £800,000

to help fund the NHS nurses.

It comes after the government agreed a payment-by-results scheme with drugs companies, in which the government will fund beta interferon and glatiramer acetate for all suitable patients with MS.

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Left out in London

Many disabled drivers feel excluded from the heart of London because of the "chaos" caused by five different sets of parking regulations, according to a new report.*

The London Assembly's transport committee says Blue Badge holders face enormous problems attending hospitals

and visiting shops and theatres.

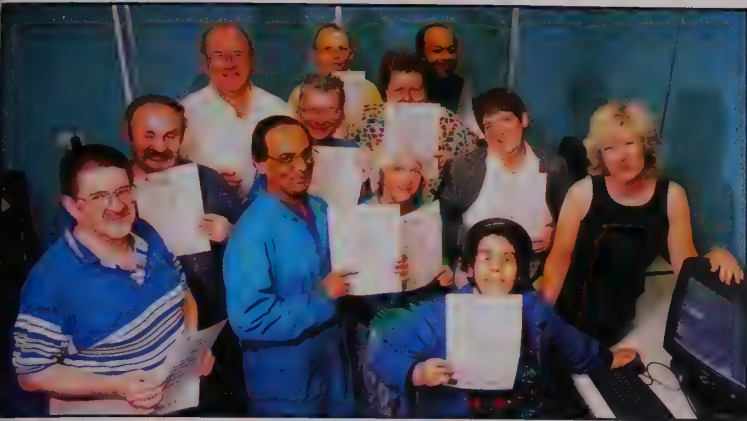
The badges allow free parking for disabled people, but central boroughs are reluctant to allow the concessions that are offered in other parts of London.

Westminster, City of London, Camden and Kensington and Chelsea councils, as well as Transport for London's Road

Network, all operate their own schemes with fewer concessions.

John Biggs, chair of the transport committee, said: "We will press the boroughs to take urgent action and work with disability organisations to sort out these problems."

* *Access Denied?*, available from www.london.gov.uk



The works: Learners from Remploy's factory in Kitts Green, Birmingham, received certificates for a nine month Basic Skills course.

Club in dog ban

A disabled woman's assistance dog has been banned from her local Royal British Legion club.

Melanie Kilbride, who has osteoporosis, osteoarthritis and asthma, says her dog Jenny is "a life-line".

Jenny can carry drinks and money, take her owner's coat off, pick things up, open and shut doors, bark for help after an accident and help Mrs Kilbride get to and from the club.

But Bracknell Royal British Legion's club committee says that club members can provide help and has refused to let Jenny into the club since last summer because of hygiene concerns.

Mrs Kilbride, whose husband spent 21 years in the RAF, cannot take action under the Disability Discrimination Act because it is a private club.

She said: "Jenny is part of me and has been for 18 months. She can come to hospital appointments but she can't come into the Legion."

Taxi rank turmoil

Campaigners say disabled people's safety will be put at risk if transport bosses push ahead with plans to move a taxi rank outside a major rail station.

Members of the Access Committee for Leeds (ACL) claimed disabled people were not consulted by Metro, the passenger transport authority, about plans to improve bus services at Leeds railway station.

To reach the new taxi rank, disabled people would have to cross two lanes of traffic, which carry up to 120 buses an hour.

Tim McSharry, secretary of ACL, said: "It poses serious concerns that at peak-times and with the current layout, it could jeopardise pedestrian safety."

Metro said discussions were continuing, but declined to comment further.

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Winning smile: Chantal Petitclerc wins the women's 800m



Ready to go: Kenya's Nganga



Up front: Tanni Grey-Thompson

Gareth A Davies reports on the Commonwealth Games, the first ever to integrate mainstream and disability sports

The inclusion of elite disability sports events at the Manchester Commonwealth Games received no lesser endorsement than from Philip Craven, the Paralympic movement's newly-elected world president. For the first time at a Commonwealth Games, elite athletes with a disability (EADs) had full medal status. Ten events in five sports were included. The last full Paralympic programme at a Commonwealth Games was in 1974, in Christchurch, New Zealand. It was phased out because the organisers felt it was too expensive.

There were demonstration events in 1994, and no events in 1998. Until now, attracting a global audience to disability sports had been every fourth year, at the Paralympic Games. In Manchester, over 200 EADs from 30 countries competed in lawn bowls, swimming, athletics, table-tennis and weightlifting. It was a success, and is only likely to grow. The International Paralympic Committee says it will continue to work more closely with the

Showing

Commonwealth Games.

Great Britain has a fine record in disability sport, and has been among the world leaders for some time. But funding is vital. UK Sport recently injected £1.7 million into launching the Athens Paralympics campaign. However, Sport England warned in a recent report that much more needs to be done if disabled people are to enjoy the same sporting opportunities as the rest of the population.

Hopefully, perceptions were changed by the Games. The events themselves were thrilling and, at times, moving. Teresia Nganga arrived from Kenya with only an ancient wheelchair she employs for everyday use, and in spite of finishing last in the first heat of the women's 800m wheelchair race in Stadium Manchester, the 30-year-old pricked a nation's consciousness.

With a state-of-the-art carbon-fibre racing chair donated by a local wheelchair racing club, and in spite of facing two of the world's most famous racers in Tanni Grey-Thompson, who carried the flag for Wales at the opening ceremony, and Louise Sauvage, of Australia, with 17 Paralympic gold medals between them, Nganga stole the show.

The Kenyan athlete was given the greatest reception by 38,000 spectators down the home straight. It was her four fellow competitors, indeed, having finished the race almost 300m ahead of her, who began the applause.

Sauvage won the 800m heat in a season's best of 1 min

56.73secs, ahead of Grey-Thompson, in 2:05.53. England's Deborah Brennan stripped seven seconds off her personal best to finish in 2mins 8.88 seconds, and was even faster in the final. In the second heat, Chantal Petitclerc, of Canada, the world record holder, set the fastest time in the second heat in 1 minute 51.14 seconds, also a season's best.

Petitclerc went on to win the women's 800m wheelchair event in emphatic fashion and laid claim to the first ever gold medal won on the track by an EAD at a major able-bodied Games. The Canadian went off fast and led the race from start to finish, fighting off Australians Louise Sauvage, who was second, and Eliza Jane Stankovic in third. Grey-Thompson was fourth.

Petitclerc, from Quebec, said: "I would not have minded who won this gold medal. I just wanted to be here, to be a part of it, on this historic night for our sport."

Only one track and field world record was broken. That came in the men's 100m event for blind athletes on the final night of athletics, when Nigerian Adegunle Adesoji broke his own world record, which he had set in the heats. Adesoji was blinded in the right eye in an accident at the age of six, and lost his left eye when he contracted river blindness two years later. He came to these Games under sponsorship from the UK charity Sight Savers, without a guide runner. Adesoji was so fast, he was linked up with Darren Scott, a training partner of Allyn Condon, a



Number one: Natalie du Toit



On the ball: the torch handover



On a roll: England's Richard Coates in the men's triple bowls

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Commonwealth class

member of England's 4 x 100m able-bodied relay team at these Games.

At the Aquatics Centre, Natalie du Toit, who was competing for South Africa in both able-bodied and disabled events, took the women's multi-disability freestyle 50m event in a time of 29.53 secs, 1.21 seconds inside the world record in the S9 classification. The teenager cemented her place in sporting history two days later when she became the first one-legged swimmer ever to compete in a Commonwealth Games final against able-bodied counterparts.

After storming to a second gold medal in the elite disability 100m freestyle event, du Toit

Olympics. "I still believe in myself as a whole person, but if what I have done here helps tie a bond between able-bodied and disabled people, that's great."

In the swimming heats, Jacqueline Khadun, 59, from Mauritius, made a statement for age and disability in the final heat of the women's 50m multi-disability swimming event. Khadun, who has had polio most of her life and has only the use of one arm to swim, finished almost two minutes slower than the first swimmer home in the heats. She was later disqualified for using the lane buoys as support. Khadun, whose husband and two children have passed away, only began swimming

Bob Dick, said it was their finest hour, as Ivan Prior, John Robertson and David Heddle clinched the gold.

One of the most popular gold medal winners at Heaton Park was blind bowler Ruth Small. The 70-year-old, guided by her husband, Jack, took gold in the women's blind singles event, beating Connie Sibanda, of Zimbabwe, 15-0. Small, of England, reached the final after winning three of her four round-robin matches, including a titanic four-and-a-half hour battle with Vanessa Hinton, of Australia.

Sue Gilroy took the gold in the women's wheelchair table-tennis singles event when she defeated Alette Moll of South Africa. Wide-angle shots and consistency gave Gilroy the edge in her straight sets victory.

The joint bronze medal went to Joy Boyd, of Australia, and Cathy Mitton, of England.

Elsewhere, David Roberts, of Wales, took bronze in the men's 100m freestyle, breaking the S7 classification world record by 0.7 seconds. Four world records were broken in the race.

As the Games closed, Louise Sauvage called for inclusion of athletes with disabilities at World Championships, but insisted that the inclusion of disabled athletes at the Commonwealth Games for the first time should not encourage integration at the Olympics.

Sauvage, winner of eight Paralympic golds, said: "I would not want the two mixed together. I believe the Paralympic Games is the highest level of competition I can go to. I have competed at the 1996 and 2000 Olympics in demonstration events, but that isn't the same as competing in the Paralympic Games. I'm happier for there to be two separate events." *Gareth A Davies is disability sport correspondent for The Daily Telegraph.*

'I decided to take up swimming to help my muscles, get fit, but mostly to get out there and show people with disabilities in my country that they can do this'

finished eighth in the 800m in 9 minutes 13.57 seconds, the race won by Rebecca Cooke in 8 mins 28.54 seconds. The packed gallery roared the two swimmers home two-thirds of a minute apart.

Eighteen-year-old du Toit can take heart from one staggering fact: historically, her qualifying and finishing times for the 800m final in Manchester would have made her the Olympic champion in 1968.

Du Toit's was a remarkable journey. On 27 February 2001, her leg was destroyed in a motorcycle accident on her way to school after a swimming session. She almost tells the story with relish. "It didn't take the leg off, it was more like it is when you drop a tomato from a great height. Everything was just obliterated."

Du Toit has vowed she will continue to break the mould by qualifying as an able-bodied swimmer at the Athens

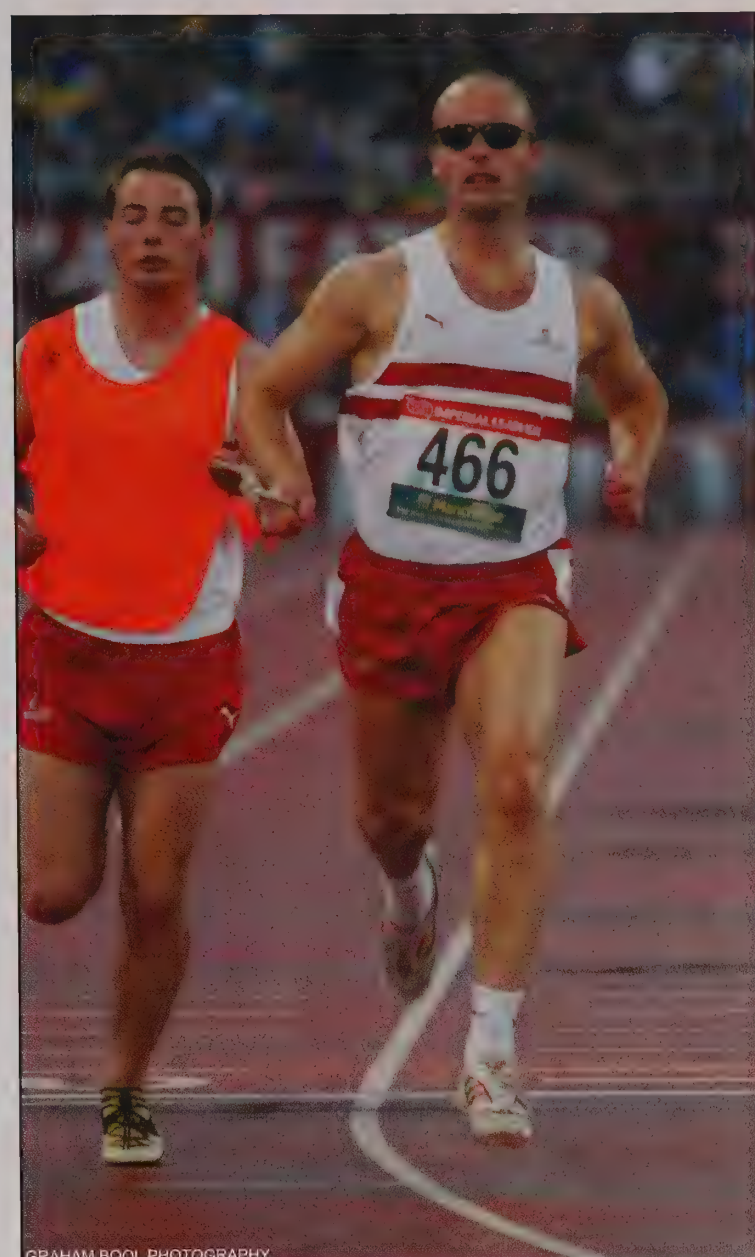
11 months ago, but she brought the house down. "I decided to take up swimming to help my muscles, get fit, but mostly to get out there and show people with disabilities in my country that they can do this."

Scotland took their first gold medal in lawn bowls at Heaton Park when the men's disabled triples beat Wales 12-8, but the win came in controversial circumstances, as sheeting rain disrupted the final end.

Scotland led for most of the match after Wales had dropped six shots in the first end. It left the Welsh trio of Kevin Woolmore, Derek Dowling and John Gronow needing three shots to draw level in the final end, but, halfway through, the rain became heavy, leaving standing water on the green.

Scotland had already placed one shot nearest the jack but in the latter half of the end, neither skip could reach the jack through the puddles.

Scotland's team manager,



Right on track: England's Andy Curtis steps out in the 100m heats



Making waves: Wales' Rhiannon Henry in the 100m freestyle

Access – there are lessons to be learned

The Games closed with a flourish amidst critical acclaim for its organisers. It was the biggest sports event ever hosted in the UK, and the first to integrate mainstream and disabled sports. Most venues were newly built; surely then, disabled spectators and competitors were right to expect first-class provision.

Most of the disabled athletes have praised the Games; not all was rosy in the athletes' village, however, where facilities did not always match up to expectations (see Profile, p14).

From the disabled spectator's point of view, there were shortcomings at several venues. Common complaints included:

- volunteers' lack of knowledge about facilities – at the Velodrome, Lynne Green ended up "struggling with the main toilets" because volunteers did not know the location of the accessible ones. At the main stadium, no one knew where the RADAR keys were kept.
- patchy provision at venues; at the Aquatics Centre the wheelchair seating was excellent, but Chris and

Eleni Burgess found the disabled toilet "knee deep" in used sanitary products.

- the delay in providing disability-related information on the Games website, including details of venue parking.
- at the Stadium, the excessive distance from the blue badge parking area to the ticket collection point.
- badly designed wheelchair seating areas – at the Stadium, companions were seated behind the wheelchair user, making conversation or assistance difficult.
- poor sight lines from many of

the designated seating areas.

Given these difficulties, it would be easy to claim that the Games had failed disabled spectators, even while it triumphed for athletes. But the infectious atmosphere of the events helped to soothe away frustrations, amid the thrill of seeing disabled athletes enjoy the same acclaim as their able-bodied team-mates.

Hopefully, lessons will be learned by Commonwealth organisers in time for the Games in Melbourne, 2006.

Libby Cross

Gilroy's gold

Sue Gilroy brought home a key gold from the Commonwealth Games, but she tells John Pring that disabled athletes are still not competing on a level playing field

Manchester's Commonwealth Games were supposed to be the inclusive games, the first multi-sport competition in which disabled and non-disabled athletes were treated as equals.

But when it came to funding, training and preparation, Manchester 2002 showed how wide the chasm still is between the so-called Elite Athletes with disabilities and their non-disabled colleagues.

Sue Gilroy, England's wheelchair table-tennis gold medal winner, illustrates this perfectly.

£25 an hour. The rest she pays herself, along with travel costs to nearly every tournament.

The 29-year-old is ranked eighth in the world, but can only fund her table-tennis career through a full-time job as a primary school teacher.

She has written hundreds of letters to potential sponsors, but currently only has one, the retailer Wilkinson, which covers travel costs for a couple of tournaments a year.

Gilroy could be a great poster girl for disabled sport. She is outspoken, bright, a huge supporter of inclusive

Commonwealth golds.

"I think it surprised them, because they have never seen wheelchair players," she says.

"We want to be seen as elite athletes. Why should we focus on our disability when we can play table-tennis and play it well?"

Her team from Sheffield Wheelchair Club helped prove this point by winning their division in the non-disabled Sheffield League last season.

Despite her sacrifices, Gilroy is clearly dedicated to her family. Her husband, Steve, their four-year-old son Ryan, and her parents Ray and Ann were all at Manchester.

The highlight of the Commonwealth Games, she says, was to win gold in front of her dad, who is seriously ill with cancer but made it to the arena to watch all her games.

He is, she says, "the bravest man I have ever met". Just before the Games, she and Steve moved back to Dodworth, near Barnsley, to be near him. They live just five doors away.

It was her parents who first inspired Sue to play table-tennis, when they took her to tournaments they were playing in.

Gilroy was forced to "retire" from table-tennis at the age of 15 because of the genetic disorder that soon forced her to use a wheelchair.

She had no idea wheelchair-users could play table-tennis until she attended a disabled sports open day.

She started competing again, now in a wheelchair, and joined



Window of opportunity: Sue Gilroy shows off her table-tennis gold medal outside her home near Barnsley

'We want to be seen as elite athletes. Why should we focus on our disability when we can play table-tennis and play it well?'

Team England's non-disabled table-tennis players all earn money from playing the game professionally and do not have to pay any of their coaching and travel costs to tournaments.

But Gilroy's lottery funding, due to be reviewed in September, is enough to pay for just an hour or two of her 10 to 20 hours a week of coaching, which costs

sport, and, above all, talented.

The non-disabled table-tennis players in the English team told her they were amazed at her performance.

Far from being an embarrassment to her colleagues, she displayed outstanding skills under pressure and won the medal that took England to its greatest ever haul of

the national squad six years ago.

Gilroy says she was delighted to represent her country at the Games "as part of the England team and not a separate disabled team".

But she was disappointed that she and fellow team-member Catherine Mitton, who went on to win bronze, only mixed with England's non-disabled table-tennis stars towards the end of the week.

Now, after a meal out together, both sets of players know each other better, and she thinks they should build on this with joint training sessions.

As for the games organisers, she says they were good on inclusivity, but not perfect. There were wheelchair accessible showers and toilets in the athletes' accommodation

— but they were outside, in portable buildings.

She also had to struggle through six sets of double-doors to get to her room.

But the volunteers were "brilliant" and the support from spectators "incredible". Especially on the day of her final.

"It was unbelievable. So many people were crying. I never expected that reaction," she says.

One of those was her husband, whose tears were caught by the BBC cameras.

So impressive was her performance and so emotional the scenes that they and Ryan were mobbed on their return to the athletes' village.

Dads were asking Gilroy to pose for pictures with their sons. Children were shouting: "It's her! It's her!"

She is still a little overwhelmed. But as she prepares for the brief respite of a two-day family break before the world championships in Taipei, she tells me that she is determined to take advantage of her win.

"I would like it to be an inspiration to other disabled people to show that if you want something bad enough there is no reason why you can't achieve it," she says.

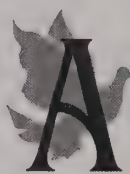
She now hopes to prove that point at the 2004 Paralympics in Athens.

Meanwhile, fans can only hope that she finally finds the financial support she deserves. If you can help with sponsorship, e-mail Sue at susan.gilroy@ntlworld.com

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Car charge cheer

As a direct result of campaigning by the Disabled Drivers' Association, the Disabled Drivers' Motor Club and others, London Mayor Ken Livingstone has agreed that all holders of blue and orange badges will be exempt from congestion charging in central London.

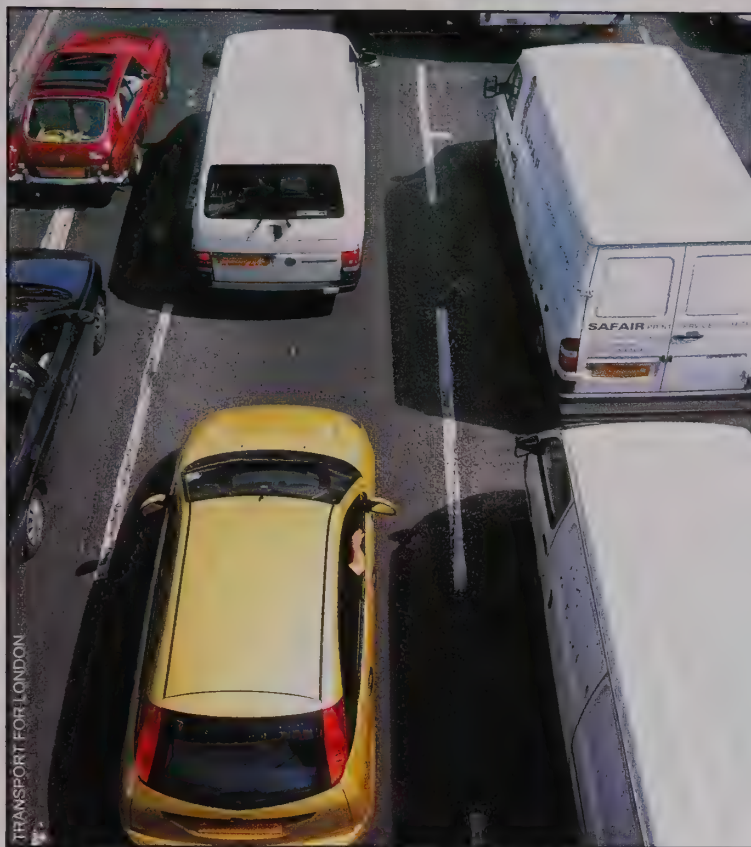
Although officially described as a 100 per cent discount, it is in reality an exemption. The Mayor plans to introduce charges in February 2003, with a charge of £5 per day for most vehicles.

The exemption will not be automatic. You must register with Transport for London and pay a one-off administration charge of £10.

To obtain a registration pack and get in before the big rush, you need to provide the following information: your title (Mr/Mrs/etc), first name, surname, full address and postcode, and blue/orange badge serial number.

Send this information to Blue Badge Congestion Charge, Dept TR121, Freepost SWC 1539, PO Box 35, Leominster HR6 0ZZ, or send it in an e-mail, quoting Code MR06, to information@ccbluebadge.com

Registration packs will not be sent out until the autumn. It is likely that you will be able to



Pay as you go: but badge holders have been awarded an exemption

apply over the counter with the provided forms at any post office that handles road tax renewals, or by post if you prefer. If you use the post office, you will not get instant registration.

You will not be able to register for exemption on the day charging starts, or even at short notice. But once registered, you will be able to change

the registration number on the day and even use two different vehicles on the same day.

If the vehicle you are using is taxed in the "Disabled" class and exempt from road tax, it will not be liable to congestion charges and no special registration is required. You will still need to register as above if you want to enter the charging zone in any other vehicle.

Motoring correspondent Douglas Campbell updates you on congestion charging, a new assessment rig and the latest Ford Fiesta

Improving assessments

At the beginning of August, Lady Tebbit officially opened the new driving assessment rig at the Queen Elizabeth's Foundation Mobility Centre, Carshalton.

The rig is one of the first of its kind in the world and is a major step forward in helping to identify the type of modifications that a disabled driver may need.

Motability has developed the rig in partnership with the Forum of Mobility Centres, with funding from Motability's Tenth Anniversary Trust. The Trust will also fund a further nine rigs at other centres that are members of the Forum of Mobility Centres.

The mobility centre at Carshalton has been heavily involved in the development of the rig and the successful pilot phase. They have now incorporated the rig into their daily work.

The rig is like a mock up of the driving area of a large car. The disabled driver being assessed can sit in a highly adjustable seat, or in a wheelchair if this is appropriate. Computerised

measuring equipment enables the centre's experts to assess the abilities and needs of the client without moving from the rig. Everything from steering strength to reaction times are readily worked and recorded.

This is a massive step for both centre staff and their clients. Staff can carry out a much more thorough assessment to a reliable and repeatable standard. Clients avoid the need to clamber in and out of several different cars with different control systems and steering arrangements. And of all this is done in the warm and the dry without moving an inch.

The data received from the recording systems will be used by manufacturers to gain a better understanding of the needs of disabled and elderly drivers. Not only does this help to give people back their independence – it is also helps to shape the future of vehicles. For information on the services available, telephone the centre on 020 8770 1151. They can also provide contact details for mobility centres in other parts of the UK.

The new Ford Fiesta

The all-new Ford Fiesta is hard to recognise (see roadtest in DN, February) – just about the only familiar bit is the Ford badge!

First to be launched in the Fiesta line up is the five-door model. Already available on the Motability contract hire scheme, the advance rental starts as low as £250, although you could pay £2,000 for the top of the range Ghia 1.6i.

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Ford offers a discount to disabled customers with blue or orange badges who are not using the Motability contract hire scheme. Ford dealers should be able to give full details. Ford MAGIC, tel: 0800 240 241, minicom: 0800 169 3049.



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'We are an easy target'

Kate Lister battled to get transport to the nursery that was recommended for her son. But shouldn't that have resulted in a change of policy for all children?

My three-year old son Barnaby has cerebral palsy (CP), which mostly affects his legs. He is a lively boy who behaves much like any other child.

It was clear that services were limited for him. Special needs seem to have a low priority when it comes to funding from West Berkshire District Council. I was always determined to get Barnaby what he needed, but did not want special

not have a car and local public transport is very difficult to manage with a special needs buggy. There are no low rider buses available in our area. When I asked one bus company how a wheelchair user would manage, I was told: "It's tough, isn't it?" I find this attitude quite common.

Barnaby has the usual childhood illnesses and additional hospital appointments, so it was not always possible to give Joe a lift to the nursery. As a consequence, he missed many sessions of his schooling and I felt bad about this.

The nursery was aware of the situation and tried to persuade the local education authority (LEA) to provide transport – they even sent a paediatric

the nursery. However, funding has not been provided for all children attending the nursery. I feel I got the transport because I was able to explain the unfairness of the situation. If it has been provided for Barnaby and Joe, it should be provided for other children.

I have found that if you argue a point and give evidence, you can change things. But it's very frustrating that any improvement you get does not result in an overall change of policy. Why should parents be left with the financial burden of transporting their children to a nursery that has been recommended, but is not always the nearest to their home?

I now have a copy of the policy for the provision of transport and it seems unfair. It states that transport will not normally be provided for statemented pupils who attend mainstream schools but then states exceptions "in a small number of cases", listing possible reasons.

I wonder if that "small number of cases" means those children whose parents are able to challenge decisions.

The government encourages mainstream education and there are few special schools, so this problem is bound to continue unless



Barnaby (above, right) and Joseph (above, left) got the transport they needed, but Barnaby's mum Kate (below) wants policy to change

'If you argue a point and give evidence, you can change things. But it's very frustrating that any improvement you get does not result in an overall change of policy'

treatment. I wanted services to improve for my child and others.

Barnaby attends a mainstream nursery, Victoria Park, with a full-time helper. Parents are often advised by professionals to send their children to Victoria Park nursery. The school is a modern building with level access, and the staff have a great deal of experience with children who have physical and other difficulties.

I was informed that, since Barnaby attended a mainstream nursery, transport or mileage costs would not be paid. I did not find this too much of a problem, as I had my own transport.

I also agreed to give a lift to another child, Joseph, who also has CP and attends the same nursery. His mother Kate does

consultant letter as evidence. But the education department refused all attempts to fund Joe's transport.

I spoke with the LEA and was told that if I wanted transport, I should send Barnaby to a special school. I explained that Victoria Park had been recommended for both Barnaby and Joe.

They said it had been my choice to send Barnaby to Victoria Park nursery. I pointed out that as part of the statement procedure, parents are required to give a preference. The decision is usually made with advice from the health, social and education professionals involved in the child's care.

The LEA agreed and transport has now been provided for both Joe and Barnaby. I was delighted, as was

a change of policy is agreed.

I do have sympathy for the LEA, as I know they have limited funds.

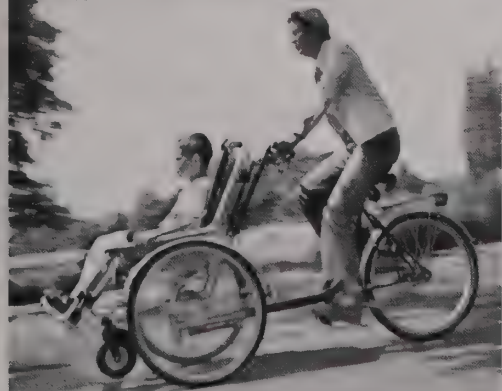
However, I think families like mine are an easy target because looking after a child with special needs leaves you little time to fight decisions or even get the information you need to do so.



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Letters to the Editor

Send your letters to the editor
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6 Market Road, London N7 9PW,
minicom: 020 7619 7332,
fax: 020 7619 7331,
e-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk



ILLUSTRATIONS CLARE CURTIS

Colour all the way

All of *DN* will be in full colour, starting next month. This is possible because a different printer can give us full colour at no extra cost. We hope you will be as delighted as we are – Editor.

Hospital promises action

I pointed out to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading, that they have no signs showing free parking for disabled people. Making drivers aware of the free disabled parking after purchasing their ticket is a nonsense. The chief executive replied:

"I will pass your comments to the facilities director and ask her to ensure that the appropriate signs are displayed."

Nice to see a hospital that is disability friendly.
Dr Rosaleen O'Brien
Luton, Beds

One commission won't work

Whoever proposed the merger of the Equal Opportunities, Racial Equality and Disability Rights Commissions (DRC) has overlooked the fact that the DRC differs fundamentally from the other two.

The Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities Commissions are concerned solely with changing attitudes to women and to (in effect) non-Caucasians.

The DRC is also concerned with changing attitudes (to people with disabilities). But it is also concerned with removing physical barriers to life and employment, which people with disabilities encounter. This is a major additional task. I cannot see that any merged Commission would carry it out as well.

K J Barnes
Hungerford, Berks

Duck is better than Frog

Reading your article about the London Frog (*DN*, July), I remembered seeing the same type of vehicles, called Ducks, in Boston, USA, last September.

All of them were accessible for disabled people. There is a stand-alone hydraulic lift which is wheeled up to the Duck. A door at its rear is opened, the lift rises to that level and you

just wheel on board.

It's ironic that the same level of access wasn't provided for the London vehicle.

Still, this just reinforces how much stronger the Americans with Disabilities Act is compared to our Disability Discrimination Act.

Ann Webster
email

Mind your language, please

DN should mind its language ("Partners in Prime", *DN* August). Words like "dodgy" are pejorative. And when it comes to "dodgy", there are some of us who think that an exclusively social model of disability is at least as deeply flawed as an exclusively medical model.

I would like to make it absolutely clear that the National Information Forum is not "hoping to step under" the "umbrella of the Enabling

Partnership (EP)", but, as the feature also says, simply in discussion with them.

Nor is the forum exclusively a "disability charity". We are concerned to encourage the provision of information to anyone disadvantaged by a lack of it. This constitutional provision may well, of itself, preclude membership of the EP.
Derek Kinrade
Hon Treasurer
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PC pulse

by Dan Batten

Bad sport

David Thomas scored a spectacular own goal in the *Evening Standard* when he wrote about the Commonwealth Games. His admission that he watches disability sport "with a mixture of admiration, sympathy and a massive sigh of relief that I'm more-or-less in one piece" is offensive. But the headline: "It may be wonderful but don't call this real sport" takes the biscuit. I think he should be awarded the wooden spoon – rapped sharply across his head.

A good sign

An anonymous *DN* reader of the *Irish Post* spotted one way to keep non-disabled drivers out of disabled parking bays – by shaming. At Ardee, Co. Louth, a sign said: "Stupidity does not qualify as a disability-park somewhere else". Should *DN* print one for every reader?



DN Make Your Mark

the education supplement that gives you the knowledge

Learning unlimited

New rights for disabled students and pupils come into force this month. Neil Crowther explains what difference they will make

Lindsey Brown began a physiotherapy course a couple of years ago. A few months later, she suddenly became very ill and was diagnosed with epilepsy. For a while, she was too unwell to attend lectures or to complete her coursework.

When she returned, she expected her course leaders to be sympathetic and make a few adjustments to allow her to continue. She was wrong. The physiotherapy department told Lindsey it no longer considered such a career appropriate because of her epilepsy. They would not change their minds.

At a time when Lindsey was coming to terms with her epilepsy and her former tutors' reaction to it, neither the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) nor the law could help. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) explicitly said she had no rights in education.

All of that will change on 2 September, when the DDA is extended to cover education.

Under the Special



Law on her side: Lindsey successfully graduated with a degree in law

not be obligated to provide "auxiliary aids and services" as a "reasonable adjustment", because these should continue to be provided via the Special Educational Needs Framework. Nor will schools be required to

formats and sign language interpretation. From September 2005, they will also have to deal with physical access.

Many education providers are already trying to promote equality and are working towards inclusive practice. The new law provides a stronger underpinning legal framework for this to happen. Also, for the first time, it provides a means of redress for disabled students, pupils and their parents to challenge discrimination.

What about Lindsey?

Partly as a result of her struggles, Lindsey decided to switch to a law degree. She was able to transfer to a course at the same university.

The contrast could not have been greater. The law department explored whether she needed any adjustments to enable her to take part. They showed understanding and, most importantly, faith in Lindsey's academic ability. Lindsey graduated with a 2:1 earlier this year. The new law means such good practice should become standard.

improve physical access under this part of the Act. Physical access will be tackled by a new "planning duty" for schools and local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales with a similar provision in Scotland. Schools must take reasonable steps to amend any policies, procedures or practices that might place disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

Post-16 educators will have more extensive obligations. Besides the duties outlined for schools, from September 2003, they will be required to provide "auxiliary aids and services", which may include things like information in accessible

Make Your Mark is sponsored by

Educating For Equality
The Disability Rights Commission Campaign

The DRC helps disabled people and those with new duties. We provide information and advice, casework and, where appropriate, conciliation and legal support. This month, we are launching our Educating for Equality campaign to ensure that the law works in action.

The DRC has published two codes of practice explaining the duties to education providers. These have been sent to all schools, colleges, higher education institutions and those responsible for adult education and statutory youth services in

Britain. We are also producing a curriculum resource pack on disability rights.

The DRC and other organisations have also produced a wide range of guidance for parents, students and education providers. All of this information, including the codes of practice, can be accessed via the DRC helpline and website.

Neil Crowther is policy manager at the DRC.

Helpline, tel: 08457 622 633, text: 08457 622 644, fax: 08457 778878, www.drc-gb.org

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● Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications at all

● One in 20 disabled people are at a college of further or higher education, compared to one in 10 of the rest of the population

Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which amends the DDA, all areas of education, including schools, colleges, universities, adult education and the statutory youth service, will be covered by new rights and duties.

It will be unlawful to treat disabled pupils or students less favourably, or to fail to make reasonable adjustments, if that means disabled pupils or students are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with their non-disabled peers.

The duties for schools are different from those covering colleges, universities and other post-16 education. Schools will



Educating For Equality

The Disability Rights Commission Campaign

the law is changing ...

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Enabling all pupils

School Standards Minister Baroness Catherine Ashton explains what the government is doing to improve education access for disabled people. Experts in the field respond



make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are not put at a substantial disadvantage. In practice, this means that schools, colleges and universities need to keep policies under review and consider adjustments to things like classroom organisation, timetabling of classes and teaching methods.

Over time, LEAs and schools will also need to plan to improve access to schools' physical premises, access to the curriculum and written material in alternative formats.

To help make mainstream schools more accessible to children with disabilities and special educational needs, we have provided funding through the Schools Access Initiative (SAI). Over the three-year period 2001-2004, £220m is being invested.

The SAI has funded projects such as installing lifts and stair lifts, improving access to toilets, and making other modifications to help those with sight and hearing problems. Since 1996, more than 6,000 schools have

benefited. We will also make £172m available from 2002 to 2004 for similar improvements in further and higher education, as well as LEA-secured education and youth service provision.

The SAI is part of a total grant of £8.5bn to improve buildings for all pupils over the same three-year period. We are currently looking at the future

projects where there is likely to be a detrimental effect on the education of children with special needs.

Looking to the future, the working group I set up to look at the role of special schools as part of our inclusion strategy is due to report this December.

We have also recently consulted on measures that

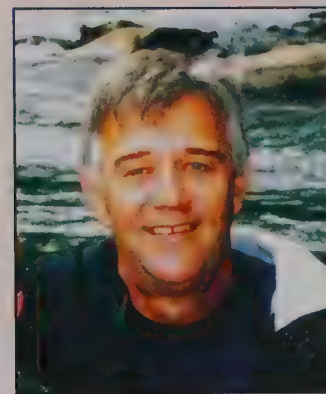
'This year marks great progress in education for disabled people'

allocation of funding following the boost for education recently announced by the Chancellor.

Special needs have also been considered. One of the amendments we have made relates to the "power to innovate", where the Secretary of State can give schools permission to suspend education legislation for up to three years, if such legislation restricts their ability to raise standards. The Secretary of State must not only consider the interests of every pupil affected by a project; they must also refuse permission for

will enable all young people to fulfil their potential. Our proposals included increasing the learning choices open to young people and encouraging schools and colleges to help individual students progress at the right pace. Ministers are considering the consultation results and will announce the next steps in the autumn. They will take full account of the needs of all young people.

Enabling all pupils and students to reach their potential is a fundamental principle of this government.



John Wright
Chief executive, Independent Panel for Special Education Advice

The Minister repeats the assurance she gave the House of Lords on 3 July. She says that no Secretary of State would approve a school or LEA project which involves waiving duties under education law if the project is likely to damage the education of children with special educational needs. This is not only welcome; it is absolutely vital.

For the extension to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, covering discrimination in schools and colleges, which comes into effect this month, contains an enormous gap: the denial of auxiliary aids and services to children with special educational needs is not deemed in law to constitute discrimination. So, while schools may no longer leave disabled children out of school photos or school trips, they can be denied the support they need in order to learn, and this will not be defined as discrimination.

The government's explanation for this gap is that children with special educational needs already have a clear legal entitlement to the special provisions their needs call for. Under the 1996 Education Act, LEAs have a duty to identify and assess children who may have special educational needs; to issue, when necessary, statements that specify the extra help children need; and to arrange the provisions set out in the statements.

These duties link to create a child's legal entitlement to additional support. Break one link, and the child's entitlement vaporises. So the protection offered by the new anti-discrimination legislation is as thin as the paper it is printed on.

This is why the Minister's assurance is vital. New Labour has created a situation where children with special educational needs can no longer rely on the law to protect their right to learn. From now on, they must rely on the Minister's word.

This year marks great progress in education for disabled people. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act comes into force in September, which will outlaw discrimination against disabled people in education. The Act gives disabled people equal rights of access to education and opportunities like all citizens.

The changes mean that local education authorities (LEAs), schools and post-16 education providers cannot treat disabled pupils, students and adult learners less favourably without justification. They need to



Brian Jones
Scope's assistant director of education

The minister is rightly proud of the "great progress" made in education for disabled people in the past year. However, the real test for this government will be to sustain the fundamental changes necessary for a truly inclusive education system in British society.

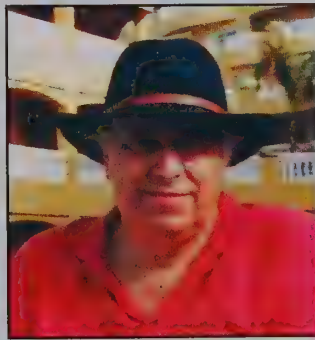
The "need to make reasonable adjustments", "the need to keep policies under review" and the requirement that "over time, LEAs and schools will need to plan to improve" things, do not suggest urgency or financial commitment. Yet these are vital to having an accessible, inclusive education in local community schools in the near future. Clarity, specificity,

direction and a planned programme on accessibility is needed in partnership with LEAs locally, regionally and nationally to achieve this.

The Minister's comments on the "power to innovate" are welcome, but she focuses too much on simply defending disabled children. This power could also provide an excellent opportunity for schools to introduce sustainable inclusive education. The ability to suspend education legislation if it restricts a school's ability to raise standards can be a positive tool to ensure equality of opportunity.

The working group report on the role of special schools as part of an inclusion strategy will be timely. A recent OFSTED report asked the government to define a clear and appropriate role for special schools and clarify its policy on inclusion.

The Minister's conclusion that "enabling all pupils and students to reach their potential is a fundamental principal of this government" is positive, but this government must now put principle into policy and policy into practice.



Peter Nicholson
Founder of the Sound, Sense and Vision charitable trust

As a mature student who is registered blind and disabled, and is a wheelchair user, I naturally welcome any initiative to make education more accessible. The government's legislation is indeed comprehensive. Whilst schools to some extent fall under the Discrimination Act, post-16 education has had no protection at all. Now it will.

Australia is ahead of the UK on further and higher education, and we can learn from their experience. The most significant problem Australian institutions have faced is the failure to provide the appropriate learning opportunity. I am not talking about physical access, but

common sense access to materials and information.

In most cases, common sense and care in assessing a disabled person's needs are the prerequisites for a practical learning strategy. Many disabled people are aware of their requirements, especially at post-16 level, and should be the first to be consulted.

Despite spending £18m on strategies to include disabled students, universities are hardly prepared to comply with the act. An act of Parliament does not change attitudes. While academics perceive disabled people as a problem and threat, opportunities for disabled students depend upon the institution's willingness to embrace change. Thus, in some areas, the immediate prospect of inclusive education is unlikely.

Fortunately, some institutions truly see the "ableness" of disabled students. Manchester City College, for example, has developed excellent teaching strategies and its approach to blind and deaf students is commendable. I implore others to learn from its example.

Tory leader takes stand

Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith has hit out at the "inclusion at all costs" policies of mainstream schooling, which he claimed fail disabled children.

The criticism comes as a government working group prepares to publish a report into the future role of special schools this autumn (see p21).

And Lancashire County Council admitted it was likely to close some of its 32 special schools.

The council said it wanted to "integrate as many children as will be able to go into mainstream schools" and develop links between mainstream and specialist schools.

But disabled children were in danger of being denied the education they needed, Duncan Smith claimed at a seminar on special education in July.

He said: "Too often today, we are encouraging the inclusion of special needs

children into schools that are ill-equipped to understand or to respond to their needs.

"Mainstream schools simply cannot offer the kind of specialised teaching and close personal care that special needs schools offer."

But a government spokesperson said: "The government has made it clear that special schools are here to stay and that they have an important and continuing role."

Parents in race to raise school funds

A group of parents are trying to raise £500,000 to set up their own specialist school for autistic children in Sussex.

The parents want their children to benefit from Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA), which breaks teaching down into simple steps.

East Sussex County Council launched a project this year to provide ABA to some autistic children, but 10 of their 23 tutors have quit.

Sam Hilton, from Crowborough, East Sussex, is furious that the council has failed to provide the number of ABA hours set out on her two autistic sons' statements of special educational needs.

She said: "Everything is such a battle. The older they get, the harder it will be to teach them."

Because of the council's problems, she and other parents are pressing ahead with plans to open their Step By Step School* for 10 autistic children next September.

Virginia Bovell, of Parents Autism Campaign for Education, called for a national strategy to address the shortage of autism specialists.

A council spokeswoman said: "There is a national recruitment problem and we are doing our very best to try and resolve it."

*www.stepbystepschool.org.uk

In brief

Date set for inclusion

The Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) is to hold an Inclusion Week from 11-15 November.

Schools, colleges and universities are invited to take part and arrange events to raise awareness of inclusion issues for disabled people in education.

Mark Vaughan, CSIE, tel: 0117 3444007

Support for nurses

Disabled nursing students on diploma courses will be able to claim allowances for equipment and support for the first time this month.

The scheme, which extends the disabled students allowance to nursing and midwifery students doing diplomas, will help 1,300 extra students.



Design for life: James Dashwood, aged 21, has secured an unconditional place for a multimedia design degree at Southampton Institute. James, who has CP and is dyslexia, spent two years at the Queen Elizabeth's Foundation's development centre in Leatherhead.

Sign up for new scheme

A charity for deaf children is calling upon the government to invest in projects that teach sign language to families.

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) has already run pilot schemes in 10 areas, funded by the Department for Education and Skills. They have helped 86 families of deaf children.

The courses is intended to teach parents, deaf children

and their siblings together.

Rosie Lloyd, director of projects and development at NDCS, said: "Our courses are big on practical words, such as making sure parents understand their children's requests when they want fish fingers for dinner."

Now the NDCS wants funding for another 50 projects in the next year.

NDCS, tel: 0800 8008880



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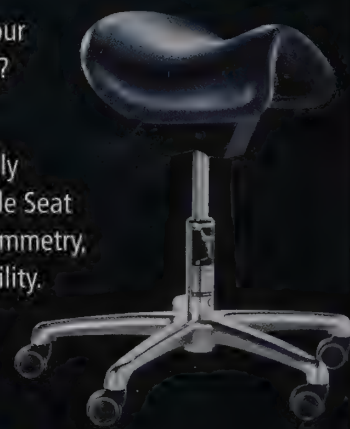
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With the growth of mainstream education, is there still a need for specialist schools? John Pring hears both sides

Mainstream dream

It's not a scene you would associate with autistic teenagers: six boys working together to build a raft in a public swimming pool.

An hour or two later, I am standing outside a unit for 16 autistic teenagers, watching the same boys playing football in their lunch hour.

Again, it is not quite what I was expecting.

The unit is part of The Abbey School (AS), a mainstream school in Faversham, Kent.

The purpose-built block opened in September 1997, following a working party that found provisions for autistic children in Kent to be lacking.

Peter Walker, head teacher at AS, who was on that working party and volunteered his school for the project, says: "People say you can't cure autism.

"OK, but by God you can improve the quality of their lives and give them a chance of independence. We are in the business of providing that."

Walker's unit has three teachers, two full-time and one part-time, and six learning support assistants for 16 pupils. It also has an educational psychologist and a speech

and language therapist.

The children spend between 30 and 90 per cent of their time in lessons in the main school, although the first half-term is spent entirely in the unit.

A lot of time is spent developing social skills, such as visiting Faversham's swimming pool and shops, or learning how to deal with frustration.

Walker reels off his students' successes. David, who has a personal development award, was out of education for two years before joining the unit.

Alex was out of education for nearly two years because his previous school couldn't cope with him. He is now thriving.

Hon is going to grammar school to take A-levels and Douglas will be joining AS's own sixth form.

Walker says: "I have seen at first hand what success can mean to a student and what it can mean to a mainstream student. It promotes their social awareness and promotes better social understanding."

Science teacher David Robins has one pupil from the unit, Aaron, in his IT class. He says Aaron often interacts in question and answer sessions

Different class?



Level playing field: head teacher Peter Walker (right) oversees pupils from the AS autistic unit

and "has never been picked on".

"It seems to work, but you have to have a class that is relatively calm and that they are able to settle in," he says.

One pupil, 14-year-old Mark Silvester, says: "If I find some subject hard, I ask for help and then the learning support assistant can help me with some of my work so I can do it properly. I feel very comfortable in here and I am used to it."

Lesley Temple is chair of

governors and has a son with Asperger's syndrome who attends the unit.

She says he had a "very, very difficult time" at primary school, because he wasn't supported properly.

"I knew when he came to mainstream secondary he wouldn't survive without the support of a specialist centre."

Her son has thrived and is expected to take six GCSEs and go on to lead a "fairly normal

and independent life".

His mum believes there should be a similar unit in every town.

Walker agrees. He says other local authorities should do what Kent has done. Such units could save councils tens of thousands of pounds in out of county placements.

"Why don't schools give people with problems a chance in the mainstream if they can cope?" he says.



Table for two: Leigh (right) and his pal James in the HAS canteen

Something special

Many of the children who attend The Helen Allison School have already tried mainstream education.

Children like Leigh, who was bullied at his secondary school. He is now in a class of five students, which always has at least three members of staff. A year after moving to The Helen Allison School (HAS), he is much more positive about his future.

Leigh, aged 13, says: "We learn social skills, like being behaved. Being with people.

"I would rather be in this school. It is easier and I don't get bullied like I did in my old one."

Now he believes that he can go to college and get "a really good job".

HAS is a specialist school for pupils aged five to 19 with autistic spectrum disorders. It is run by the National Autistic

Society on two sites in Kent.

It aims to provide a more structured and protective environment for its autistic children. Its strength is its in-depth support and expertise. There is a speech and language therapist and an educational psychologist, and each class has a maximum of eight pupils under a teacher and at least two class assistants.

Deputy principal Linda Hall says: "It is not revolutionary, but we can give a much higher level of support than in mainstream schools."

Teaching social skills is vital. Pupils are taken on outings to stately homes and swimming pools and encouraged to speak to people in shops and order meals in cafés and restaurants.

"We are attempting to make them feel they can cope with day to day life as much as possible," says Hall.

Theo Johnston, aged 10, is bussed to the school every day from Bexley.

His dad, Hal, says Theo couldn't cope academically with a mainstream school.

And Mr Johnston likes the emphasis on learning about the "outside world".

"He has suddenly become

very interested in words and language and started asking people questions about what words are," he says.

Michael Hines, from Orpington, Kent, is 12.

His mum Sandra had "misgivings" about placing him in a specialist school.

"We were worried about the influence it would have on his development. As it turned out, he has gone ahead in leaps and bounds.

"He gets the chance to do some serious academic work but also to experience life in

society in a measured way, which he would not get in a mainstream school."

Linda Hall says there will always be a need for schools like the one she helps run.

"In a mainstream school, these children are over-stimulated; they become extremely stressed and their behaviour is extremely challenging.

"They need this sort of low arousal and calm. I don't think it is possible to replace this completely in a mainstream setting."

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The secret of m

Dan Batten finds out what made learning easier for seven students, past and present

Speech/language therapy

Beverly Milner got a first class honours degree in operations management from the University of Greenwich Business School with a bit of help from their Disability and Dyslexia Centre.

Beverly, 28, (below, right) only realised she had dyslexia when she came to university and found it increasingly hard to keep up with work. A specialist advisor from the centre diagnosed her dyslexia and arranged for an assessment by an educational psychologist.

"The educational psychologist diagnosed my strengths and weaknesses.

The staff at the centre then helped me adopt learning techniques to develop my strengths. They also helped arrange funding from my local authority for a lap-top computer." As a result, Beverly received the University of Greenwich Award for Outstanding Achievement in her specialism for achieving the highest grades in both her second and final year's coursework.

"The support and help that I have received from the centre has been invaluable. The staff there gave me the confidence to face my disability and the skills to get around it."



Wired for sound: Susana's grant made research easier.

Charity grants

A grant from the Snowdon Awards Scheme got Susana

Medina the help she needed to undertake research for her PhD, which is looking at the

notion of space in the short stories of Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges. Susana, 36, has Cogan's Syndrome, which affects her hearing, and she has a cochlea implant. She used her grant to buy a special Nokia mobile phone which interacts with her implant via a special cable and allows her to make and receive calls. "The phone is great for me when I'm out doing fieldwork," she says.

She also uses a radio aid in lectures and conferences, which lets her hear much more. "The radio aid is brilliant. Before I had it I couldn't attend lectures", says Susana.

"The people at the Snowdon Scheme are really lovely, and the equipment I was able to buy with my grant gave me a tremendous moral boost."



University disability service

An early trip to see his university's disabilities officer smoothed out a lot of things for 19 year-old Simon Iskander.

Simon, who is visually impaired and studying for a

Master of Engineering degree in computing at Imperial College, London, contacted disability officer Loretto O'Callaghan before he started his course and found her a great source of practical help.

"She helped me apply for the Disabled Students Allowance and also arranged for me to have the option of staying in halls of residence on site for the duration of my course," said Simon.

With his allowance, Simon bought a laptop, printer and scanner. "The laptop helps me with written work as I can type much more quickly than I can write," he says.

Simon uses a pair of

binoculars to read boards and projections in lectures.

Loretto has also arranged for Simon to have extra time to complete exams and supported Simon's application for a freedom pass, which gives him free travel on buses and the London Underground.

"Loretto has opened up my social life at university as well as giving me support with my academic work," says Simon. "I would definitely encourage other disabled students to approach their disability officer before they start their course to enquire about what help is available."

CONTACTS

The Independent Advisory Centre for Education offers information on state education in England and Wales, including special educational needs. Tel: 0808 800 5793, www.ace-ed.org.uk

Connexions, website www.connexions.gov.uk, email: info@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

The Independent Panel for Special Education Advice (IPSEA) helps children with special educational needs. England and Wales, tel: 0800 018 4016, Scotland,

tel: 0131 454 0082, Northern Ireland, tel: 01232 705654, website: www.ipsea.org.uk

The **RNIB** education and employment centres offer advice including careers guidance and training and support assessments. Tel: 020 7388 1266, website: www.rnib.org.uk

The **RNID** offer a wide range of communication services covering the whole of the UK. Tel: 0808 808 0123, textphone: 0808 808 9000, fax: 020 7296 8199, Email: informationline@rnid.org.uk, website: www.rnid.org.uk

Scope publishes *Action 19+*, a guide to getting what you need from your local authority if you are 19 and over. For all information, tel: 020 7619 7100, website: www.scope.org.uk

Skill, the national bureau for students with disabilities, has information on grants and funding. Information service, Mon-Thu, tel: 0800 328 5050, email: info@skill.org.uk, website: www.skill.org.uk

The Snowdon Award Scheme, tel: 01403 211252, email: info@snowdonawardscheme.org.uk



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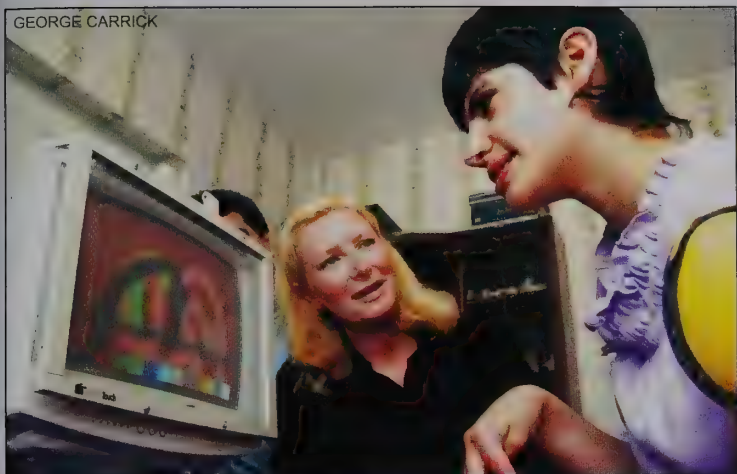
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Success



Screen saver: home tutoring was the answer for Valentina Arca.

Charity support

When her local education authority (LEA) failed to meet the points set out in 13 year-old Valentina Arca's statement of special education needs, even after a High Court hearing, her parents decided that teaching Valentina at home was the answer.

Valentina has cerebral palsy, microcephaly and a profound learning disability. Cumbria LEA failed to provide suitable support staff for Valentina, as well as suitable seating for her in class, which resulted in her developing dysplasia of her hips. A sensory integration programme and a paediatric occupational therapist to

help Valentina's sensory and motor skills development were also missing.

When Valentina's health and happiness declined, Maureen Arca (above) and father Tonino removed her from school, in March 2000. Mrs Arca says the school's staff were "very nice but very overstretched".

The first step was to draw up a teaching plan. "The National Curriculum isn't suitable for Valentina, so we developed our own programme" says Maureen. This involves using computer programmes run on a touch screen computer which develop Valentina's concept of cause and effect, and her

ability to effect change, eg the steps involved in making a journey. She also paints using a touch screen art package.

Valentina uses these programmes every day, as well as having a twice daily mobility skills session and hydrotherapy sessions three times a week. Regular outings play an important role too.

The family says it has received invaluable support from fieldworkers and the assessment service at Scope. The programme has been praised in six-monthly LEA reports.

Most importantly, Valentina is benefiting from it. "She is far happier since leaving school, her health has improved and she can now take several steps in the pool," says Maureen.

Statement

A statement of special educational needs helped 19 year-old Ben Murphy.

"Up to the age of 13 I couldn't read sentences and my writing came out backwards," says Ben, who has dyslexia.

When he began attending a college that met the needs in his statement, the improvements were quickly noticeable. "Within a year my reading had improved and I was able to put sentences together. I also felt a lot more confident about reading passages from books."

These improvements came about through one-to-one reading help, with Ben reading passages aloud.

"Rather than just saying the words, my assistant would help me break the words down and then read them as a whole. I got far more words right than wrong after a short while," Ben says. Ben would also copy out stories from books for writing practice, which had a positive effect.

Since then, Ben has gained three GCSE passes and a pass with merit in a GNVQ Art and Design course, receiving help from a reader and extra time in exams. He is currently deciding which offer to accept to do a HND in photography starting this month. "If I had never had a statement, I wouldn't have managed," says Ben.

Inspirational teacher



My greatest help throughout my education was my primary school teacher, Myra Tingle (above), writes Dan Batten (below right).

She showed a lot of belief in me and always pushed me that little bit harder. She thought I was academically ahead of my classmates and would, for example, give me 12 maths questions when others in the class had 10. This wasn't always very popular but it might explain why I can work out my bill in Safeway's before the till does!

Myra also made doing classwork much easier. As my primary education came before computers were used in class, I used a typewriter for written work. I made plenty of mistakes, as my manual dexterity wasn't up to much. When I was about nine, Myra introduced me to a Brother typewriter, which, unlike a conventional typewriter, displayed text on a screen a line at a time, giving me the chance to correct it before printing. My work improved greatly and Myra made sure I had a Brother up to the time I took my A levels.

Myra also pushed for me to go to a mainstream primary

school. I did this for a while, but although I was accepted and fitted in I never quite felt comfortable and returned to special education. Although I didn't realise it at the time, my spell at the school prepared me well for mainstream sixth form education later on.

Another thing which helped develop my confidence was our regular trips out. Myra was keen for us not to be "stuck in class" all the time, and arranged lots of educational visits to museums and places of interest. Not only did I learn from whatever exhibition I was at, but I also learned how to behave in a public place, as well as how to cope with the inevitable stares.

Although she gave a lot of practical help, it was the confidence and determination Myra gave me that helped most. I still have the stubbornness and the desire to do things my way that Myra gave me over 20 years ago, and I'll never forget where these traits came from.



Connexions

18 year-old Danielle Cleary found a place at her local college with the help of Connexions, a government service that helps 13 to 19 year-olds with issues around school, college, work, and personal and family life.

Danielle, who has a visual impairment, had been taking a music course at a residential college, but found the college unable to cater for her needs. "The music sequencing computer I

needed was always broken and books that I needed to be translated into Braille weren't," she says.

Despondent and fed up with being in a residential set-up, she left her course.

On her return home she made contact with Connexions, who assigned her to personal adviser David Ritchie. After in-depth conversations about what equipment and support Danielle would need, David arranged an interview with Croydon College. This proved a success, and Danielle is due to start studying AS level English literature and psychology this month, with the support she needs in place. "You need to tell the whole story to make sure you get what you need," she says.

Danielle is adamant that she couldn't have got into Croydon without David's help. "He was reassuring and always there to talk over any problems or worries."

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Making SENse

Peter Brill reports back from Birmingham on recent developments in special education needs

Bring top educationalists together from around the world and you'd expect to hear about the latest special educational needs (SEN) teaching techniques. But when the major theme of presentations and lunchtime chat is parental influence and professional co-operation, you wonder if you've come to the right place.

The Foundation for Conductive Education's "Choice" conference in Birmingham in June set up parents as the latest teaching innovation. An education guru who said parents no longer accept simple answers to complex education problems shone a beam of hope into the gloom felt by many of us fighting for decent, quality education for our kids.

Dr Christine Pawelski, director of the Institute of Complementary Practices at New York's Columbia University, is convinced that

Yet US parents have been behind the latest changes. "After 25 years of patting ourselves on the back, we suddenly realised we had to listen to families and learn what they are saying," said Dr Pawelski. "They want one person to provide intense practice and support for families. Now the US is looking at reviewing the issue of too many professionals dealing with individual students."

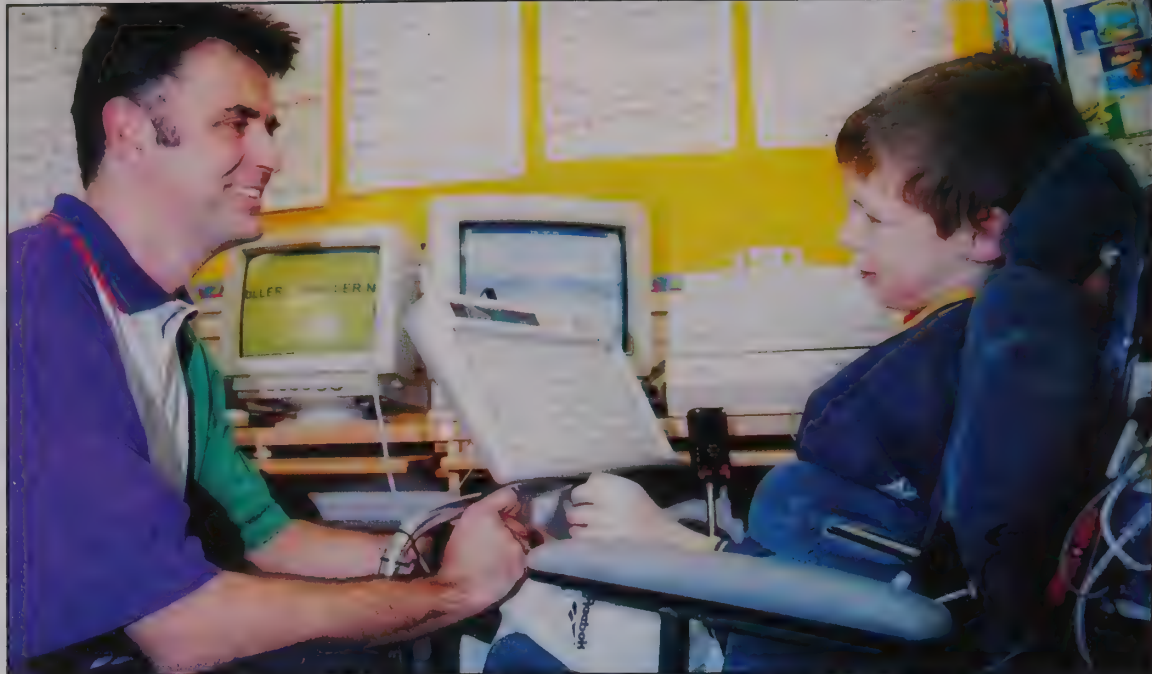
Dr Phil Bayliss, of Exeter University's School of Education and Lifelong Learning, thinks there is enough UK law to strengthen existing bridges between professionals and parents. But if SEN education is to be really effective, he said, "you need to view it with a professional and non-professional gaze. This stimulates professionals, but it also helps parents recognise the opportunities within the context of their child's

'After 25 years of patting ourselves on the back, we suddenly realised we had to listen to families'

"legislation has driven what's happening in the US". For example, the rush for technology has benefited from the 1998 Technology Related Assistance Act, which asserts that information technology will help SEN children develop in mainstream environments.

strengths and weaknesses."

Dr Bayliss backs the approach being developed at Scope's Trengweth School in Plymouth, which bridges the gap between education, therapy and the community (including immediate family) by analysing everyday living and learning. It



One to one: Paul Graham (right) with Stuart Evans at the Percy Hedley Foundation School

focuses on seven "intelligences", because everybody learns in different ways and some intelligences are stronger than others. It breaks down the educational curriculum, including sport, leisure and home activities, and sets targets for every learning skill, matched to each child's intelligence.

Liz Bailey, assistant head at The Milestone School in Gloucestershire, believes the new drive for "inclusion" has been helpful. "We've been amazed at the change over the last four years. From negativity and questioning the need and appropriateness of inclusion, mainstream teachers are now

receptive and looking at how the curriculum could be changed."

From being left out of exam results for league tables, SEN pupils are now being included. "In some cases, SEN pupils have been measured in the top third of the class," Bailey adds.

A unique system of graduated inclusion is being developed in Israel. Conductors accompany parents and children through the transition from the Tsad Kadima conductive education centres to mainstream schools. So far only primary school children have done it, but a secondary school project is on the way. The organisation also

owns "training apartments" where conductive practices are used to prepare young adults for living independently.

Linking up with Israeli innovation has helped the Percy Hedley Foundation School in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. They are combining conductive education with some key principles of a technique developed by Professor Reuven Feuerstein of the International Centre for the Enhancement of Learning Potential in Jerusalem.

The school has worked with Newcastle University to adapt Feuerstein's technique, which concentrates on "thinking skills", and it's paying off.

Head occupational therapist at Percy Hedley, Stewart Evans, says: "Using the thinking skills programme, we have seen an increased application of reasoning skills [by pupils] in other classes and subjects, with greater levels of general awareness and spontaneity, an improvement in creativity and application of ideas."

So did the conference offer us parents any new choices?

Some established teaching tools are being skillfully blended to give dynamic results. But, more importantly, legislators, administrators and professionals may finally be waking up to the fact that parents and pupils play a critical role in education.

Phil Bayliss told us that, for the first time, European Community research is under way to establish the real cost benefits of education. "If it's proven that better education can reduce lifetime care costs, then you'll start to see much more happening in developing SEN education."

Let's hope the numbers add up for our kids' sakes.

www.conductive-education.org.uk

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Education, including disabled people. To this end, the University has now adopted the 'Social Model' of disability and is striving to improve its facilities, course delivery and services for disabled people.

Over the past three years, the Disability Service team has been established and now has six staff. This has also set up a Support Workers' scheme, employing a range of staff working as Note-takers, Study Skills Support Workers, etc, with disabled students.

This service aims to enable disabled students to make the most of the opportunities offered at the University by working with students and other staff to try to ensure as integrated and accessible an experience as possible.

The University Handbook for Disabled Students and Those with Special Needs is available on the web at www.brunel.ac.uk/disability or can be supplied in Braille or audio tape.

For further information please contact the Disability Service on:
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A current student who accesses a range of support.

College knowledge

Further and higher education can open doors for disabled people, but only if help is there. Rod Hermeston investigates

Continuing in education can give you greater earning power or simply boost your life skills.

A recent survey showed that the average graduate earns £15,000 more than non-graduates by middle age.

There are, however, barriers to further education (FE) and higher education (HE).

For instance, in January, the National Audit Office found that non-disabled 18-year-olds were 2.5 times more likely to go to university than their disabled counterparts.

Barbara Waters (*below*), chief executive of Skill (the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities), says the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) will help by tackling discrimination and increasing education opportunities at school.

But FE and HE colleges need



The University of North London, now part of London Metropolitan University, is gearing up to meet the demands of the SENDA.

But Dr Caroline Davies, manager of the Disabilities and Dyslexia service, has been working on improving access for years.

The university is currently working to ensure that dyslexic and visually impaired students would be able to use any computer terminal in the university, because specialist software will be networked into them.

to comply with the Act as well (*see page 21*). And they are being given money to do so. For instance, £56m has been allocated for 2002-4 to help English universities improve buildings and IT systems in line with the SENDA.

And Waters adds that universities will have to take disabled students needs into account, for example, every time they do building work or upgrade computer facilities.

"If universities get that message and begin to do it, we will get a gradual raising of the baseline," she says.

Meanwhile, there are barriers in FE as well. For example, Liz Maudslay, policy director for further education at Skill, says that people with complex learning disabilities and mental health problems are under-represented.

The SENDA will help them, and the Learning and Skills Council has also allocated £15m this year to help English colleges comply with the Act, while part of a £20m package will help Scottish colleges do so too.

Youngsters who want to enter FE or HE can get advice from the government's Connexions support service for people aged 13-19, careers offices or Skill.

Dr. Davies says: "It means that they will not have to go to particular machines; they will be able to study alongside their mates."

The Springfield centre, part of Oaklands College in St Albans, has won a government-backed Beacon Award for inclusive learning. It has 80 students, often with complex learning disabilities and severe physical disabilities. Many may need full personal care, use hoists and need feeding.

Denise Wallace, curriculum team leader at Springfield,

Money is available to help pay for special equipment and support while you study. In FE, this goes directly to the college.

For those in HE, the disabled students allowance (DSA) can help. It can pay £11,000 a year for support by a non-medical helper (NMH), and £4,355 for special equipment over the course of a degree.

And the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has recently announced that students will no longer have to wait for A-level results before being assessed for this.

Waters says: "It will smooth the timetable between application, assessment and taking up your place."

The government also announced in March that it would allow the DSA to be used to pay for the holiday leave of NMHs and the management costs involved in employing them. Scotland is considering this too.

Of course, a huge issue for students is money to live on.

The government has announced that from 2004, a means-tested student maintenance allowance of £30 a week will be available for 16 to 19-year-olds in FE in England, while discretionary FE maintenance grants are already available in

says: "You very rarely see the learners that we educate in FE."

Part of Springfield's role is to advise other colleges setting up similar units, she says.

The University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, has written an Accessible Curricula guide, which is being sent to other UK universities.

Its suggestions include putting notes on-line or providing course elements in alternative formats, such as virtual field trips on video or CD-ROM.



The Graduate: Jennifer Ball, who is blind, just gained an honours degree in Human Resource Studies and Business Law from the University of North London

Scotland through colleges.

Students from Wales who are over 18 years old can now apply for means-tested grants up to £1,500 for HE and FE through their education authority.

Students in HE outside Scotland may have to pay tuition fees. And many students rely heavily on the student loan for living expenses, although maintenance bursaries of £2,000 a year are available in Scotland.

Chris O'Sullivan, outgoing students with disabilities officer at the National Union of Students, says HE maintenance

grants should be restored everywhere.

"The financial pressures on disabled students make it even more important," he says.

The DfES is carrying out a review of HE student funding, due to be published this autumn.

But it is important to remember that disabled students may be able to claim Housing Benefit, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and Disability Living Allowance.

So there are still some problems, but things are looking up and there is financial help.

CONTACTS

Skill, tel: 0800 328 5050, text: 08000 682422, www.skill.org.uk

Connexions, www.connexions.gov.uk

For FE students, the booklet *Money to Learn*, is helpful, tel **DfES**: 0845 602 2260, text 08456 055560.

On HE finance, **DfES**, tel: 01325 392822 or www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport/finance2001.cfm

For information on courses and funding, tel: **Learndirect**: 0800 100900.

Benefits enquiry line, tel: 0800 882200, text: 0800 243355.

Career Development Loans can support living costs, tel: 0800 585505.

Student Awards Agency for Scotland, tel: 0131 4768212, www.student-support-saas.gov.uk

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From a distance

Distance learning has increased over the years, particularly for disabled people. John Pring looks at what it has to offer

Almost by definition, distance learning (DL) is the most accessible form of adult education.

Brian Merison, general manager of the British Association for Open Learning, defines it as an "any time, any place" method of gaining qualifications, without the need for face-to-face contact with a tutor and the hassle of visiting a campus for lectures and tutorials.

Gillian Moore, director of study programmes at the DL provider National Extension College (NEC), adds: "It means you can study in your own home.

"It also means you can study at your own pace, which can be very important if you are sometimes not fit, in pain or tired."

This doesn't mean the student is simply left to get on with it, though. Support is vital. This could be through telephone or e-mail contact with a personal tutor, or web-chats between students taking the same course.

One of the advantages of DL is the range of materials that deliver the course.

The internet is becoming increasingly popular, combined with any mixture of local study centres, summer schools, video or audio cassettes, TV and radio programmes, and written material.

There are also efforts to make it easier for disabled people to take part in DL.

NEC is involved in two schemes to boost the number of disabled people and carers who take their courses, by paying their fees and providing them with mentors.

And the government promotes DL through the learndirect adult education helpline and its learndirect centres.

The best known DL provider, the Open University (OU), says it has been an equal opportunity institution ever since its launch in 1971.

Now it has even more of a claim to such a title.

Six months ago, it set up a



University's no challenge: Students at the Open University attend summer school in Bath

Centre for Assistive Technology and Enabling Research (CATER) to improve access to its courses for disabled students.

CATER has established an access centre in Milton Keynes, to carry out assessments of would-be disabled students in the south Midlands, enabling them to claim disabled students allowance (DSA) to pay for support and equipment.

There is also a £100,000

mobile bus which can visit disabled students in their homes to carry out an assessment.

Although only about six per cent of OU undergraduates are disabled, the number of its disabled students has risen by between five and 10 per cent a year for the last 15 years, a faster rate of growth than non-disabled students.

Ralph Keats, head of CATER, says the number of

disabled people studying with the OU will continue to rise in the wake of the government's decision two years ago to allow part-time higher education students in England and Wales to claim DSA. Scotland has since followed suit.

Moore agrees that numbers will increase, but only if funding and information are more widely available.

Contact one of the **Open University's 13 regional centres** or visit www.open.ac.uk

Contact the **National Extension College**, tel: 01223 400350 or at www.nec.ac.uk

Call **Learndirect's** helpline, tel: 0800 100 900 or visit www.learndirect.co.uk

Visit the **British Association for Open Learning** website at www.baoldirect.com



Tasleem Fatima left school at the age of 17, fed up with constantly having to catch up on the lessons she had missed because of her rheumatoid arthritis.

But after a holiday in Pakistan, she returned refreshed and eager to continue her education.

When she heard about distance learning, she was delighted. "It was best for me because I didn't have to get up in the mornings and rush. It was all at my own pace," she says.

She decided to take A-levels in psychology and sociology with the National Extension College (NEC), a major distance learning provider.

She missed talking to other students, but frequently took advantage of NEC's telephone and e-mail tutor support.

After she passed her A-levels, her arthritis improved. "I thought, let's not stop here. Let's go to university," she says.

She completed a diploma and has just completed the first year of a degree in social work at Manchester Metropolitan University.

As a result of her efforts to continue her education, she was invited to a Young Achievers garden party at Buckingham Palace in July.

She says she would recommend direct learning to other disabled people. But she adds: "You have to discipline yourself. It's easy to say, 'oh, forget it, I will do it tomorrow'."



Peter Mansell's Open University degree taught him skills that have served him well in his career.

Mansell took his course several years after a spinal injury. He went on to become chief executive of

the Spinal Injuries Association and the disability charity RADAR. He is now director of patient and public involvement at the National Patient Safety Agency.

"They gave me the degree, but more importantly, they gave me the method of working and learning, of understanding things," he says.

He studied for a general degree, concentrating on social policy, between 1987 and 1990.

He later completed two management qualifications, also via distance learning.

He is a huge fan of the Open University (OU). "I think the OU is the best thing since sliced bread. If you give it your commitment, the benefit you get out of it is manifold."

And he says the OU understood the principle of reasonable adjustments long before it was defined by the Disability Discrimination Act.

For example, an invigilator visited him at home so he didn't have the hassle of travelling to an inaccessible venue to take exams.

Although he says direct learning can be isolating, he adds: "I was unemployed, so it gave a structure to my day without me needing to disrupt my environment."



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Film

Austin Powers in Goldmember



Austin Powers in Goldmember, the third of Mike Myers' James Bond spoofs, is a frenetic romp through toilet humour and movie references (including some witty use of celebrity cameos).

Powers' nemesis Dr Evil summons from the past Dutch supervillain Goldmember ("an unfortunate schmeling accident..."). Together they hatch a plan to hold the world to ransom, starting by kidnapping Austin Powers' father, played by a twinkling Michael Caine.

Not all the film's gags succeed, but they keep coming fast enough not to matter, with particular emphasis on sex, shameless puns and gross personal habits. Minor characters include Dixie Normous and the Japanese

twins Fook Mi and Fook Yu; Powers Sr drives a mini with the number plate GR8 SHAG.

Goldmember is not the most intellectual film you'll see all year, but it's great fun if you like that sort of thing – which I'm afraid I do.

The potentially problematic element in all this is Mini-me, Dr Evil's miniature clone. The role risks making fun of people of restricted growth, particularly as Mini-me is portrayed almost as a pet. (At one point he tries, like a randy dog, to shag someone's leg.)

But I don't really see any evidence that the film is making a link between the character's size and any negative attributes. This is not, after all, a film in which any character gets treated with reverential respect: witness, for example, Goldmember's habit of picking and collecting flakes of his own skin. Mini-me is played with great charm by Verne Troyer.

Allan Sutherland

TV



C4 continued its disturbing series on *Death* with the startling statement that *You're Better Off With Cancer*.

Apparently 95 per cent of the terminal care budget goes to cancer patients and only five per cent to heart disease and other fatal illnesses. Not a lot of people know that.

Natural Born Talent in C4's 7.55 slot celebrated the work of disabled performers and artists with a series of beautifully shot films which were innovative, empowering and thought-provoking – all in three minutes.

The use of Chris Tarrant as narrator in C5's *Amnesia: Trapped in Time* detracted somewhat from the seriousness of this fascinating documentary: I was poised for it to degenerate into one of those terrible Japanese endurance game shows.

Talking of endurance, C4 gave an object lesson in the subject with *Children*

Behaving Badly – the children endure the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, food refusal or whatever, and the parents have to cope as best they can.

Deep joy – *Phoenix Nights* is back (C4), written, directed by and starring the wonderful Peter Kay as Brian (Ironside) Potter, whose club is burnt down and with it his liquor licence. The eponymous Phoenix Club rises to the challenge with a fleet of motorised trikes as star kiddies' attraction at the fund-raising Family Fun Day – "why should the physically impaired have all the fun?" Why indeed.

There's fun to be had if you DO know the way to San José, where "conferences" are held every year for amputee "devotees", as seen in *Amputee Admirers* (it would be Channel 5, wouldn't it?). Could I suggest an alternative title? *Pervs'R'Us*? As my mum would say, "They're all a bit queer except thee and me – and even thee's a bit queer".

Jane Shepherd

Dance



Globaleyes



Globalisation is an ambitious theme for a multimedia dance piece. Did Chicken Shed's latest production *Globaleyes* rise to the challenge?

An early scene, "Frantic", was promising. Eighteen dancers worked their way in and out of two scaffold structures, seemingly disregarding each other. This conveyed a sense of fighting for space in a crowded world driven by consumerism.

Perhaps the use of a wheelchair using dancer as a prop during this scene was meant to complement this metaphor. If it was, it wasn't very impressive, reinforcing old stereotypes and failing to use the talents of the dancer.

"Dust to Dust of Human Rights" got the second half off to a spirited start. Its staccato beat enabled the dancers to give the impression that they

had some insight into the issues at stake, as they railed against the horrors of exploitation and child labour.

However, overall, the message was overly simplistic and relied too heavily on text displayed on an electronic indicator board. The piece felt like an end-of-term extravaganza.

I know many will disagree. One audience member I spoke with was ecstatic about the piece "because of the joy on [the performers'] faces."

Well, call me greedy, but I want something more than that from a performance. Chicken Shed gets so caught up with the use of disabled performers that the disabled performers are included when it suits them and don't appear to influence the artistry or aesthetics. Groups like Graeae, Heart 'n' Soul and Candoco know such influence is important – and that it makes for interesting, innovative art.

Ruth Bailey



Coming up



The National Film Theatre, London, is showing Ichikawa's *Her Brother (Ototo)*, the story of a brother and sister driven apart by their disabled stepmother (1 Sept, 8.45pm; 4 Sept, 8.40pm). It is also showing *From Freaks to Film* (17 Sept, 6.10pm), a historical look at human exhibition. To celebrate Scope's 50th, the film *Skallagrígg* follows at 8.30pm. This centres on a group of young disabled people seeking the source of a legendary force said to have protected a boy with cerebral palsy. Wheelchair access is limited, so book early. Tel: 020 7928 3232, www.nft.org.uk



Jordan Baseman has captured over 100 hours of images and information on video during a residency at Papworth Hospital. The work will be shown simultaneously at Wysing Arts, Cambridgeshire, and the Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa, 14 Sept-10 Nov. Tel: 01954 717101 or 01926 742701.



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Get more summer outing ideas from DN's final Out and about special

It was one of those problems of the modern age – how do I celebrate my 50th birthday? I wanted to do something different. The usual suggestions were made – white-water rafting, hang-gliding, racing car driving – none of which are very practical for an electric wheelchair user!

Then a friend suggested hiring a canal boat, so we ended up on the Stenson Bubble in the tiny village of Stenson, near Derby. There is a small boatyard and also a pleasant pub nearby.

Eighteen of my friends and family joined me for my trip on the Trent and Mersey Canal. It took three hours, including a spectacular turn around of the boat halfway – not a driver!

The barge is a little tricky because of a small gap, so I used a relative's portable ramps. (The owners are willing to lift wheelchairs over the gap and are considering buying some ramps.) Once you are over the gap, there is a

lift down to the deck, which is extremely spacious, and there is a viewing lounge and bar. We had an excellent meal, while viewing lovely scenery and wildlife. Unfortunately, there is no accessible toilet, though there is one at the pub.

We thoroughly enjoyed our evening. The Bubble is also regularly open for Sunday lunches and weekday meals in the summer. The cost of hiring the boat varies from £200 to £250, plus the cost of the meal.

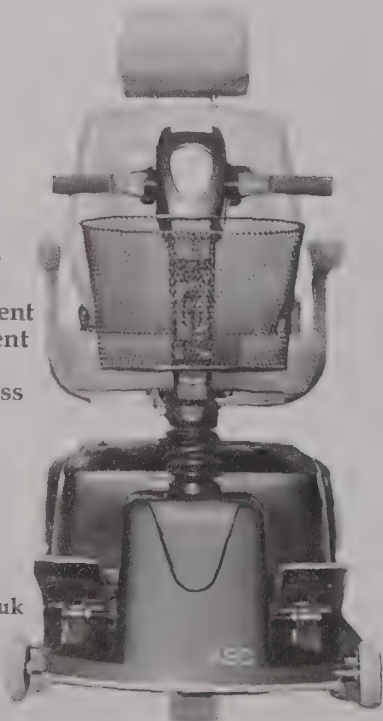
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Grahame Anderson recommends Scaling Dam Sailing Club

Budding disabled sailors will soon be making waves beneath the spectacular backdrop of the Whitby Moors in North Yorkshire.

Scaling Dam Sailing Club believes everyone should be able to enjoy the great outdoors and has set about attracting disabled members. Toilet and changing facilities have been adapted and the club has invested £6,000 in an accessible jetty, where a hoist will enable wheelchair users to be lifted into Challenger craft – ideal vessels for disabled sailors as tutor and

sailor can sit side by side.

The club runs free taster sessions and Graham Wing, responsible for members with disabilities, recommends coming along. "Having a disability doesn't mean not being able to enjoy the feeling of freedom that sailing can give. Last year we had disabled members complete the Royal Yachting Association Level 1 training scheme. One member moved on to Level 2, which means he can now sail alone. There's no reason why disabled sailors can't compete in the Challenger racing circuit,

with events from the Clyde to Rutland. In short, everything is possible."

At the taster sessions, people are invited along and the club assesses how best to handle their disability.

"We give you all the help you need

to learn and you can sail at your own pace just like everyone else," says Graham. So why not push the boat out and give sailing a try?

Contact Graham Wing, tel: 01287 650226, www.scalingdam.freemove.co.uk



Do you like driving and getting out into the countryside? If so, you will find the Mobility Information Service booklet, *Scenic Drives in Shropshire*, a valuable aid. It has detailed directions for five routes in the county, including useful information about accessible amenities on the way.

I tried out the drive between Bridgnorth and Ludlow with some friends. We left Bridgnorth and followed the directions towards Cleobury Mortimer, passing through Earlington and Chelmarsh.

At Chelmarsh, we decided to stop for a drink at the Bulls Head Inn. Access from the car park is on a ramp and, while there is a shallow step at the entrance, it wasn't a problem for my wheelchair. The doorway could have been a little wider, but, once inside, there was no problem getting to a table. As the booklet points out, there are no accessible toilets at the pub, but the manager said I could use the toilet in the overnight accommodation.

Back in the car, we drove through several

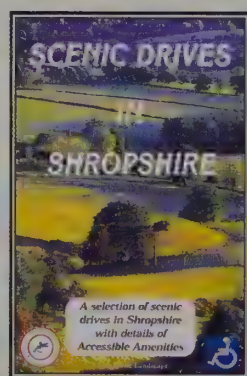
delightful villages, eventually arriving at beautiful Mortimer Forest. The mobility trail there is easily accessible and very pleasant, although there are no accessible toilets.

Arriving in Ludlow, we decided it was time for a spot of well-earned lunch, so we headed for the Assembly Rooms. I can certainly recommend the food there, and the staff are very friendly and helpful.

I thoroughly enjoyed my day out and, if you need accessible facilities, this booklet definitely helps you have a hassle-free drive.

Jean Griffiths

£1.75 including p&pp, Mobility Information Service, Unit B1, Greenwood Court, Cartmel Drive, Shrewsbury SY1 3TB, tel: 01743 463072, e-mail: mis@nmcuk.freemove.co.uk



Animal house

Clare Dickerson and her daughter Leah visited Animal Farm in Berrow, where they made some four-legged friends

When my daughter Leah was six weeks old, she contracted meningitis septicaemia, which left her brain damaged. This has caused her to have a visual impairment, epilepsy and global development delay. Although she is nearly five years old, she has only developed to the age of a 1 to 2 year old.

I have been able to assist Leah's development with the help of BIBIC (British Institute of Brain Injured Children). While on a visit for a re-assessment, we decided to take her out for the day as a treat for all her hard work.

We went to the Animal Farm Adventure Park in Berrow. It was a sunny day when we arrived at 10 o'clock. The time

was right because it was quiet.

We looked at the rabbits first, who were very cute. Even Leah could see them, as you can get up very close. They are used to people admiring them and were quite happy to stay put whilst we were there.

Then we went on to the ducks. Again, although they had fencing around them, you could get quite close and they weren't shy. This is really important to Leah because of her visual impairments. A while back, we visited another zoo, which Leah didn't enjoy because the animals were too far away for her to see properly.

Next, we went into a lovely barn with numerous animals. We couldn't decide what to look at first, but we needn't

have worried as Leah spotted something interesting: miniature tractors in a padded play area for children to ride on. Leah got really excited about this, and I helped her with a little push. It didn't take her long to realise that she could use her feet to make the tractor move. The good thing is that if she crashed, it was into padded walls so she couldn't hurt herself.

Around mid-day, we took Leah into one of the timed activities. There she was allowed to sit on a chair and stroke one of the smaller animals. But I decided that maybe this wasn't a good thing: I didn't want to be responsible for a bald rabbit after Leah had pulled out its hair. We walked



The bleat goes on: Leah and her aunt Elizabeth Towell feed a sheep

to the end of the farm where there were more sheep and goats. Leah was a little worried, as the Billy goat was getting rough with the others and trying to steal food.

It then began to rain, but by now, we were all hungry, so we headed for the Old Barn tea-rooms. You could have anything from a snack to a big meal, and it was all freshly cooked and reasonably priced.

After lunch, it was still raining, but this didn't spoil our afternoon as the huge play barn has a new extension to keep everyone happy whatever the weather. It's a brilliant place with huge slides that weren't too difficult to get Leah up to. There was also a

large, soft, play area for the under fives which Leah loved. It had a huge ball pit and a smaller slide, which Leah managed to climb with only a little help. As long as you took your shoes off, adults were allowed in, which was nice.

A great day was had by everyone, as all areas of the farm were accessible to people with disabilities. I couldn't criticise anything, though I sometimes found the gravel paths a bit of a struggle with Leah's buggy.

The entire staff at the farm was very warm and friendly and extremely welcoming and I would recommend this to anyone as a lovely day out. It certainly wore Leah out; She slept all the way home.

To get to **Animal Farm** from M5, take J22, head for Burnham, then Berrow, then follow the brown signs to Red Road. Adults and children, £4.20; disabled people, £2; free for children under three years old; OAPs, £3.90. Tel: 01278 751628, website: www.animal-farm.co.uk

BIBIC is a national charity based in Somerset that offers support to families caring for children with sensory, motor, communication, social and learning difficulties. Individual lifestyle programmes are produced by a multi-disciplinary team of therapists. Tel: 01278 684060, website: www.bibic.org.uk

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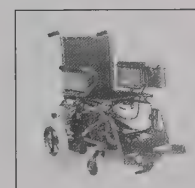
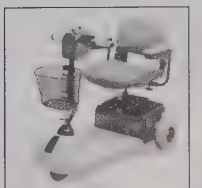
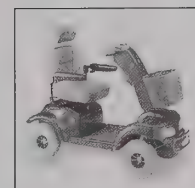
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Talking about a taboo

Worried about continence? There is help if you know where to look, says Jolyon Rose

Six million people live with bladder problems – but we very rarely hear about them.

This is the task facing *Incontact*, a UK organisation for people with bladder and bowel problems. Despite being so common and, in many cases, easy to treat, bladder and bowel problems are still taboo. Many people suffer in silence rather than face the embarrassment and shame of seeking help. Research has even shown that doctors are embarrassed.

The first port of call for many people is the continence adviser – a specialist nurse employed by the NHS. But many people have never even heard of a continence adviser, let alone know how to find her (they are usually women, but not always). *Incontact* or your GP can tell you where your local continence service is.

When they do get in touch, the continence adviser can do an initial assessment, discuss various treatment options and begin a number of useful



treatments. In more complex cases, she will refer you to your GP or a specialist. This may involve further examinations, while the doctor is trying to find the problem and how best it can be treated. In the meantime, or if a problem cannot be completely cured, many people are provided with free pads by the continence adviser.

There are big variations in the kind of service people receive around the country. This “postcode lottery” has been noticed by the Department of Health (DoH) in a number of areas, but, for continence services, there is little obvious progress. In fact, with more and more decisions being made locally by the new

primary care trusts, it may be that variations will rise. Already we have heard of trusts that wish to close down their continence services, further restrict the type and amount of pads they supply or are failing to fill vacant posts within their continence services.

There is still hope, in the shape of the National Service Framework (NSF) for older people. This is an important document as far as the DoH is concerned, and local health authorities will be expected to

what would normally constitute an integrated service.

Incontact aims to provide information to people about the type of services they should expect. Our leaflets and website have details about products, services and treatments, and where people can go for help. We also have a national network of local groups that can provide support.

Of course, we will always come back to the taboo, and this we hope to address. Our conference (it will just have

‘Many people suffer in silence rather than face the embarrassment and shame of seeking help’

follow its directions. One key part of the NSF makes it clear that all areas should have an “integrated continence service” by 2004. Anyone thinking of cutting back their continence service would be well advised to refer to this document, and also to *Good Practice in Continence Services*, another DoH document which sets out

taken place when you read this) is an annual event that brings together consumers and health workers to discuss progress and plan action. We are working to develop new ideas for getting publicity.

Out of the six million people with bladder problems, only a fraction has ever had the help they need. *Incontact* is driven by people with these problems – our chairman and a majority on the board of directors are all “consumers” – so we know what it is like and we want to make a difference.

Jolyon Rose is executive director of Incontact.

My battle

My incontinence started when I was 14. While my friends were worried about the boy next door, I had to worry why my bladder wasn't working. They chose



make-up while I had to choose absorbent pads and waterproof pants.

I felt robbed of my youth. My confidence and self-respect were shattered. It was quite by chance that, just two years ago, I found out about *Incontact* and discovered I was not alone.

The benefit I got from talking to others in similar situations was huge – it was like a weight had been lifted.

Since then I have set up the first support group in

‘It was like a weight had been lifted’

Wales for people with bladder and bowel problems. Our group meets every month and has had lots of support from the local continence services and other voluntary organisations. Even the local media have given us publicity.

The progress we have made has been remarkable. Less than a year ago I represented *Incontact* at the launch of new guidelines for continence services at the National Assembly for Wales... and no one had heard of us. These days, I get calls every day from people needing help.

Raising awareness is crucial – incontinence should not be taboo. I am sure we can all make a difference.

As for me, well, what a far cry from the girl who couldn't even mention the word incontinence without wanting the world to swallow her up. My urologist is still looking into improving the management of my condition but – even though the medical prognosis is poor – I feel I have begun the biggest recovery of them all. I have got back control of my life. *Joanne Chincock is a volunteer for Incontact in Wales.*

CONTACTS

Continence Foundation, tel: 0845 345 0165, website: www.continence-foundation.org.uk

Incontact, tel: 0870 770 3246, e-mail:

info@incontact.org, www.incontact.org

PromoCon provides impartial and confidential advice about continence products and has up-to-date displays of the full range of products on the UK market. For more information, tel: 0161 834 2001, fax: 0161 214 5961.

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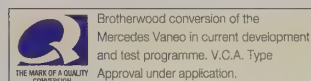
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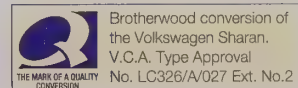


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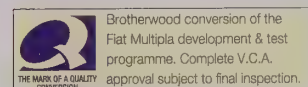


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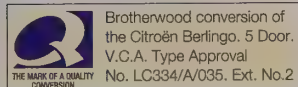
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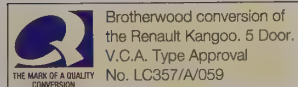
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Dear Ann

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

Ann Darnbrough, who is disabled herself, is co-author of the *Directory for Disabled People* and other guides.

Write to her at *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or e-mail your problem to editor@disabilitynow.org.uk



A helping hand

In a back issue, I read about a disabled man who had been given a little "hand relief" from a nurse or carer whenever he wanted it. I am also disabled and unable to do that for myself. I do not have a regular carer or nurse who would do that for me either.

Graham, East Sussex

Wonderful helpers like these are hard to find and, of course, they never let on that they are prepared to help. It's all so secretive, but it can mean so much for people that need that special help.

I suggest you contact the Outsiders Club. While they cannot provide this sort of help, it is just possible that they may be able to advise you further. They also have groups here and there and you may find out if there is one in your area.

Call for hope and help

I am 21 years old and have cerebral palsy. For the past year and a half, I have been depressed. My best friend died two years ago and I just can't seem to get over it.

I am also feeling very frustrated with my disability. I find it hard to do everything and it takes me ages to get washed and dressed. I am finding it much harder to move around and am getting muscle spasms, which makes me even more frustrated.

Emma, Maidenhead
I am so sorry to hear that you have been depressed. It is very natural that your bereavement should be causing you so much unhappiness. However, it is important that you slowly move

on. Your friend would want you to remember all the happy times you had together and would not want you to go on mourning in a way that may cover up the happy memories. I am sure they will always be with you, and it would be good if they could come to be associated with a happiness that provides strength for the rest of your life.

It is important to consult your doctor about your depression and muscle spasms. They may suggest time with a physiotherapist or other suitable professional. Have you tried contacting Scope's helpline?

It can be very frustrating to be slow in daily life. It can also be very boring. Do you enjoy reading? If so, you could, in

your imagination, dip into your present book and discuss whatever you like with the characters. You could find the time slipping away.

Let me know how you get on. I'm interested to hear about any new friends or interests.

Life after marriage

I am writing with a suggestion for those with divorce blues. I have a website for those who want to move on after divorce and have now added a new section called Friends Network. It is a means of communication for people, with an emphasis on friendships rather than relationships.

Paul Maitland, Leigh on Sea
Thank you for writing. I am sure divorced readers will be

glad to hear of your new section. The time after divorce is always very depressing and we all need friends who will understand our problems.

Side effects

A year ago, I had a brain scan which showed that my cerebellum had shrunk. The doctors suggested this could be due to overuse of the anti-convulsants I had taken for 20-25 years. It now emerges that the original diagnosis of epilepsy was wrong and that the drugs were not necessary.

I would like to contact someone with the same or similar problems. I contacted a solicitor, but she said I would not have a case.

Leila, Oxfordshire.

I am sorry to hear of your experience and if any readers contact me, I will pass their letters on. While the anti-convulsants, I am told, are not addictive, they may have side effects for different individuals.

You could contact the Patients Association. You could

also get in touch with Epilepsy Action, who I am sure would be able to advise you. The National Society for Epilepsy has a helpline, too.

I care when kids stare

Could someone do something about primary education? Every time I meet a small child, they stare at me as if I'm a two-headed monster with a skin condition that has particularly awful side effects. They then hide behind their parents, who never correct them. I can remember learning that racism was disgusting, but no one mentioned disability prejudice.

Somebody ought to complain vigorously. I am not a two-headed monster. I'm a perfectly ordinary teenager.

Nuala, e-mail

I spoke with James Partridge about your problems. He founded Changing Faces, an organisation to help people with disfigurements build self-esteem and self-confidence. He has a leaflet about empowering people to cope with staring.

The other side of the coin is, of course, educating teachers and children to accept each of us as we are. James mentioned the development of diversity curricula and the concept of citizenship, which, hopefully, will address these issues.

Changing Faces, 1 and 2 Junction Mews, London W2 1PN.

Epilepsy Action helpline, tel: 0808 800 5050.

National Society for Epilepsy helpline, tel: 01494 601400.

Outsiders Club, BM Box Outsiders, London WC1N 3XX, tel: 020 8220 5949.

Patients Association helpline, tel: 0845 608 4455.

Scope helpline, tel: 0808 800 3333.

Divorce website: www.ondivorce.co.uk

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Help at the end of the phone

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick gives disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psychotherapeutic counsellor and Methodist local preacher, with a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. If you have something you need to discuss in confidence, talk to her on Mondays 6pm-10pm and Thursdays 1pm-5pm, tel: 01787 882111.

Get your kicks!

Football grounds may not be known for being accessible, but, as Dan Batten found, recent improvements are making it easier

With Sky TV filling the airwaves with umpteen games a week, you're probably asking "Why should I bother to brave the elements when I can watch football at home or in the pub?" The answer is simple. While you get to see every pass, dribble and goal on the small screen, there's one thing missing on TV – the atmosphere.

Although life is still tough for the disabled footie fan, many grounds are slowly making it easier. Predictably,

weren't overawed at playing the best team in the land. But none of the red army were ready for the shock that came in the 26th minute. A United corner was cleared away and moved upfield towards Bournemouth's goal, where it was slotted past our goalkeeper – 1-0 to them. The singing quietened temporarily.

We weren't downhearted for long. Parity was restored when Solskjaer played a great pass to Veron, who made his shot into the back of the net

youngster Ben Muirhead with the equaliser and Michael Stewart scored our eventual winner a short while later.

With the game now won, it was time for me to witness a small bit of history, the debut of our latest signing, himself an ex-Bournemouth man. Rio Ferdinand's arrival on the pitch was greeted with a huge roar, followed shortly by his own song from the Man U choir. They're quick to write a new tune, those lads.

With the whistle gone, it was time to make our way home. Although only a friendly, the game left me feeling confident for the start of the Premiership season. Beware Arsenal, we want our title back!



'You're probably asking "Why should I bother to brave the elements when I can watch football at home or in the pub?" The answer is simple. There's one thing missing on TV – the atmosphere'

facilities and the number of accessible spaces vary from club to club. Some offer very little due to a lack of cash; others have hi-tech radio commentary sets for visually impaired fans as well as adapted loos for half-time breaks. The National Association for Disabled Supporters has comprehensive details on facilities available at all league grounds.

If, like me, you just need a steadying hand to climb stairs, it's wise to go with a friend. And if that friend happens to be a lifelong fan of the same club as you (in this case, Manchester United), even better.

Today's travel with friend and steadying hand Bob took us to Bournemouth to see our beloved reds play in a testimonial match. While it wasn't going to be anywhere near as nail-biting as a game against arch-rivals Arsenal (BOO!), the presence of several first-team players, including Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, Juan Sebastian Veron and Ryan Giggs, made for a good game, as did some very vocal supporters. If you ever wondered why their singing is never heard clearly on TV, go to a match. The songs would have made Mary Whitehouse faint!

With Bob's obligatory match pie in hand, it was time for kick-off. It was immediately obvious that Bournemouth were not going to be sacrificial lambs. They attacked from the off and

look easy and sent us into half time level at 1-1.

With singing volume restored, the stage was set for an exciting second half. But no sooner had the ref blown his whistle for it to start than Bournemouth scored again and went 2-1 up. I was beginning to feel like a jinx.

I needn't have panicked. Around the hour mark, Giggs (*right*) supplied United

National Association of Disabled Supporters, www.nads.org.uk

National Multidisabled Football League, www.nmdfl.co.uk

AFC Bournemouth, tel: 01202 726300, www.afcb.co.uk

Manchester United Football Club, ticket enquiries: 0870 442 1994, www.manutd.com

The Football Association, tel: 020 7745 4545, www.thefa.com

Fédération Internationale de Football Association, www.fifa.com

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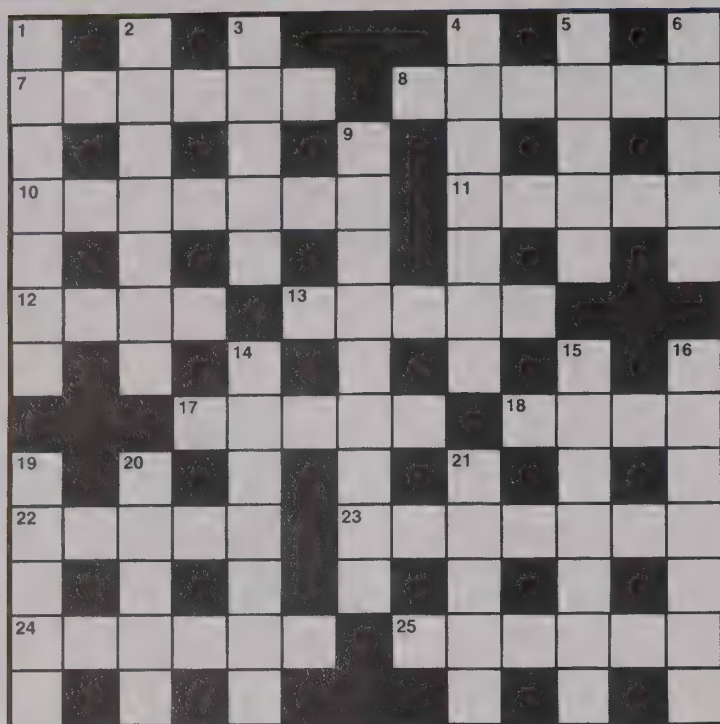
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Looking for something to keep you amused while you wait for yet another shower to blow over? Try *DN's* crossword teaser.

ACROSS

7. Remedy for all ills (6)
8. Revealing swimwear (6)
10. Hitchcock movie starring James Stewart and Kim Novak (7)
11. People shout this when they win at bingo (5)
12. Fidel Castro's country (4)
13. Aquatic, fish-eating mammal (5)
17. Note that is a semitone higher than the corresponding one of natural pitch (5)
18. See 4 Down
22. Mountain peak in the Swiss Alps (5)
23. A ship's yard (4,3)
24. Cam used in machinery to give intermittent (6)
25. Tony, the creator of *Coronation Street* (6)

DOWN

1. See 3 Down
2. Bacterium causing disease (7)
3. **And 1 Down.** The number of disabled people employed by this organisation has fallen by 2,000 in three years (5,7)
4. **And 18 across.** Famous actor who has Parkinson's Disease (6)
5. Feeling of resentment or hurt pride (5)
6. Chief executive of the Disability Rights Commission (5)
9. See 19 Down
14. Name of four kings of Spain (7)
15. Romantic relationships (7)
16. Test (7)
19. **And 9 Down.** She helped launch The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association's One Vision campaign (5,9)
20. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made this country strategically important (5)
21. Points scored continuously in snooker (5)

CROSSWORD BY JIM MCLAREN
ILLUSTRATION BY SAM GILLESPIE
ANSWERS ON PAGE 40

CROSSWORD SPONSORED BY
Creating opportunities with disabled people
LEONARD CHESHIRE

CANDID DAN has skipped town, but he'll be back next month!

**"It is a real boon
to be able to push the chair straight
into the vehicle"**

Mr. Hutchings of Keynsham



Mr. and Mrs. Hutchings have a much easier life now that he doesn't have all the lifting and dismantling of their chair that he used to do. Mrs Hutchings goes straight up into the back of their Kangoo and they're off.

We understand the mobility needs of wheelchair passengers and offer a great combination of personal service and a wide choice of vehicles. Find out if we can help your situation.

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Mr/Mrs/Miss First Name

Surname

Address

Postcode

Home Tel.

- ☐ Send me more information
☐ Contact me to organise a test drive

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mobility**

FCP-DN-09/02

What's on

Disability North will hold The Disability North Exhibition, 9-11 October, Gateshead International Stadium. The show is aimed at disabled people, carers, NHS buyers and health or care professionals and will feature stands from information and service providers, environmental control systems, vehicles, small moving and handling aids, bathing, lifting, sensory and paediatric suppliers. You can also catch up with members of the DN team on stand 64. Admission is free. 9.30-5pm Wednesday, 9.30-6pm Thursday and 9.30-2pm on Friday. For more information, contact Janet, Joyce or Ruth, tel: 0191 284 0480, fax: 0191 213 0910, textphone (Minicom V1): 0191 285 7261, e-mail: marketing@disabilitynorth.org.uk



Experienced Foster Carers urgently needed for cheerful chatty sociable young man with extensive medical needs

Christopher urgently needs a couple able to offer family based care. He has learning difficulties and a bowel disorder which means he relies on Total Parental Nutrition via an overnight IV Hickman Line. He also has a colostomy bag and is prone to haemorrhaging.

Christopher does not consider himself ill and enjoys watching sports, computer games and going on outings. He attends a special needs school in Kingston.

Christopher demands a lot of attention and stimulation, but everyone currently involved in his care enjoy working with him.

Christopher's Foster Carers will receive a generous weekly allowance.

To find out more about caring for Christopher call **Rhyannon Boyd**

Tel: 020 8770 6672

London Borough of Sutton Adoption & Fostering Service



Where a gravity drain is not an option the Whale kit provides a reliable solution to draining showers.

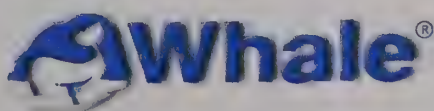
New For 2002
Whale have introduced the Silent Flow Shower Drain Pump Kit.

This new kit is for use in shower trays with a corner trap.



No regular maintenance is necessary. The Whale kit pumps hair, gels, grit and other shower waste without blocking. This pump meets European standards for safety and operation.

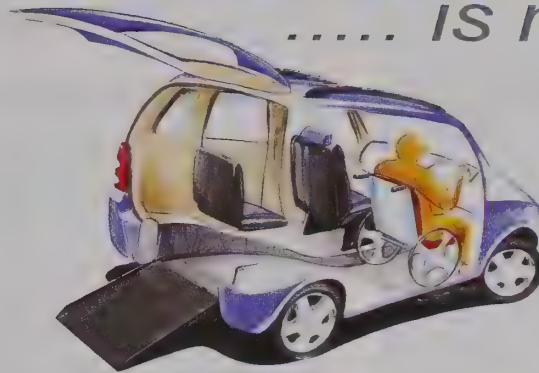
See the new Silent Flow in operation at INDEPENDENT LIVING on Stand A150.



For further information on this Whale Kit contact Whale Support
Tel: 028 91270531 Fax: 028 91466421
Email: showerdrain@whalepumps.com

The dream

..... is now a reality



Drive directly from your own wheelchair

It's unique, a fully automated Drive from Wheelchair solution is here - Suzuki Life and it is set to revolutionise the lifestyle options for many with disabilities. It's a car, take a look for yourself and you will hardly be able to spot the difference and what's more neither will anyone else. But on the inside it is very special indeed. Fully automated, remotely controlled tailgate and fold out ramp systems give instant access to the radically modified lowered floorpan - right up to the driving position where the wheelchair is automatically locked down. Press the button to close the tailgate, press another to release the handbrake, engage the automatic gearbox and you're away. Just 30 seconds or so, including time for you and your two passengers to fasten their seatbelts.



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The aim at Jubilee is to provide the best engineered products in the UK along with the very best value for money. Our Liberty Range is widely acknowledged as being the most innovative and well built mobility vehicles ever seen. Why compromise on style and comfort? Now you can enjoy the ultimate travel experience; whatever your needs.



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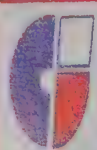
Jubilee Automotive Group, Woden Road South, Wednesbury, West Midlands, (2 miles from junct.1 M5 or junct.9 M6 Motorway)



What's on

The ME (Myalgic Encephalopathy) Association will hold their Autumn Forum and AGM, 21 September, Edinburgh. Speakers will include BBC disability affairs correspondent Peter White, Scottish parliamentarians John McAllion and Alex Fergusson (from The Scottish all-party group on ME), consultant paediatrician Dr Nigel Speight and Dr Charles Shepherd, the MEA's medical adviser. Tel: 01280-818963, email: pr@meassociation.org.uk

The ADAPT Trust will hold Open Sesame – The Magic of Access – Access in Action, Thursday 12 September 2002. RADA, London. The seminar will examine aspects of positive access to theatres using examples presented by Graeae, Vocaleyes, STAGETEXT, Cambridge Arts Theatre and the RSC. £50 per delegate (includes lunch and refreshments), £40 for further delegates from the same organisation. Tel: 0131 346 1999, Fax: 0131 346 1991, email: adapt.trust@virgin.net



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Courses

The Disabled Living Foundation (DLF) has launched its autumn range of courses designed to meet the needs of anyone working with disabled and older people. The courses are targeted towards healthcare professionals, associated staff and carers. Subjects include learning disability awareness, falls prevention and moving and handling people – an introduction. The DLF also offers tailor-made courses and in-house or on-site training. Contact DLF Training 380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU, Tel: 020 7289 6111. Fax: 020 7266 2922, email: training@dlf.org.uk

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 7. Elixir

8. Bikini 10. Vertigo 11. House

12. Cuba 13. Otter 17. Sharp

18. J.Fox 22. Elgar 23. Yard-

arm 24. Tappet 25. Warren

DOWN: 1. Service

2. Microbe 3. Civil

4. Michael 5. Pique 6. Niven

9. Boothroyd 14. Charles

15. Affairs 16. Examine

19. Betty 20. Egypt 21. Break

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- 58" access through the door and internal height by a lowered floor section
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- When stationary the roof can be elevated to give approx 8 foot internal height making transfers a lot easier
- Prices from **£16,950** (2.5TDI)
- We also offer a standard roof Volkswagen Transporter with ramp access, prices from **£14,950** (2.5TDI)

Caddy Kombi

- Lowered floor for rear access with low angle ramp
- Seating for four plus wheelchair
- Prices from **£13,295** (S model), **£14,490** (SE model)



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DN LINAGE

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- Personal

WIDOWER, 73, TALL, non smoker, non driver, gsoh would like to meet caliper using disabled lady for friendship, outings, holidays etc. Driver if possible. Box no: 187

MALE, 57, SPORTS injuries affecting knees and back, can walk very short distances only. I am shy, caring, kind and considerate and hoping to meet a lady. Box no: 188

MALE, ABLE-BODIED (ALMOST), divorced, ex-property manager. Mod house, Lincolnshire Wolds. Wltm possible new partner, 40-50 yrs. All answered. Box no: 189

FRENCH MALE, 36 years old, is looking for an open minded lady penfriend for entertaining correspondence and friendship. My interests include travel, exotic music and books. A bientot! Box no: 190

ABLE-BODIED MALE, 34, medium build, caring, easy going wltm attractive physically disabled female of similar age. I'm in Yorkshire, where are you? Box no: 191

- Cars/vans

ELAP ROTATING PASSENGER car seat for Rover 200/400 Mk 2. Hardly used. £250. Tel: 0151 920 7545.

CHRYSLER GRAND VOYAGER with conversion for wheelchair passenger. Low mileage, fsh. Tel: 01264 324471 (Andover).

VW 800 VERSA Transporter, reg; 2001. Automatic/diesel. 6 seater or 5 seater plus wheelchair user. Rear ramp and winch. Only 800 miles on clock. Genuine reason for sale. £15,950 ono. Tel: 01305 267416 (Dorchester, Dorset).

ELAP SLIDE AND rotate front passenger seat for Citroen Xsara. Vgc. £300 ono. Tel: 01283 520892.

CHRYSLER GRAND VOYAGER, 2000 (W), diesel, 26k miles from new. Carony wheelchair system next to driver. In excellent condition, £17,000. For more details, tel: 01782 513803.

FIAT FIORINO 1.9D, N reg, 44k miles, fully converted for wheelchair user. Ramp rear access, winch, rear seat, very good condition. 1 month's MOT, taxed to December. £3,300. Tel: 0191 264 1948.

VW SPECIAL 1.9 diesel May 2001. 4,500 miles. Lewis Reed conversion with Ricon tail lift. Driver and 3 passenger seats plus wheelchair passenger. £12,500. Tel: 01792 842604.

MERCEDES CAMPER VAN, 1992K converted for wheelchair front 3 passenger. Ramps and clamps. Cooker, fridge etc. Mains electric, double bed. Very reliable. £3,500 ono. Tel: 01642 315666 (Middlesborough).

BROTHERWOOD SHARAN 2.0GL, P Nov 96, auto, 52k miles, top spec, fsh. Immaculate condition. Available soon. To share trade in difference. £13,900. Tel: 01483 415084.

NAVY FORD COURIER VAN, auto, 1.4 'R' reg '98. Wheelchair access via rear hydraulic ramp, power steering, front and rear passenger seats. Only 5,500 miles. MOT November '02. Vgc. £7,500. Tel: 01323 733726.

DAIHATSU HIJET FREEDOM Plus, metallic grey. Lightweight ramp, electric winch. Registered 2001, under 5k miles. As new, £6,750 ono. Tel: 01622 851490.

NISSAN PRAIRIE 2.0LX, auto, K reg. Brotherwood conversion. Genuine 35k miles. Beautiful condition, reason for sale as possess new vehicle with Brotherwood conversion. £5,950, part exchange will be considered. Tel: 0115 9263700 (Nottingham).

ELAP ROTATING DRIVER'S seat used in Vauxhall Astra. No headrest or fixing bolts. £200. Elap rotating driver's seat used in Vauxhall Corsa, has headrest but no fixing bolts. £250. Tel: 01457 873697 (near Oldham).

1994 L REG Chrysler Grand Voyager/IMS conversion. 3.3CC petrol engine, 28k miles, sliding side door with power ramp. Air kneel suspension for easy access. Wheelchair position front passenger seat. Photos available. £9,900. Tel Val: 0151 722 9603.

1994 FIAT COACHBUILT motorhome, 1 owner, 25k miles, tax, MOT, 4 berth, Interbility lift, chair clamps, fully equipped, full oven. Rear seat with full harness, stainless steel exhaust. £9,500. Tel: 01773 765709.

VW CARAVELLE 2.4TD, Dec 97 (R), 24,500 miles, 12 months MOT fsh vgc, Ricon R/C underfloor side lift, seats 6 + WC - inc - bench seat, central locking alarm sunroof. £9,750 . TEL 020 8325 8469.

NISSAN VANETTE 2.3D 1996 (N reg) blue with full MOT. 25k miles, owned by same family since new and serviced regularly. 4 seats and space for one wheelchair via motorised tail lift. £5,500. Please tel: 020 8886 3046 or 020 8989 0296.

PEUGEOT 306 1.8GLX auto estate (dark green). 1999S. £4,500. Adaptations: electric brake accelerator (on door), lightened pas, head-indicators, leg-horn, electric chair hoist. Air conditioning, electric windows, automatic wipers, fsh, 22k miles, MOT, I owner, £7,200. Tel: 01874 636141 (Mid-Wales).

FORD FOCUS AUTOMATIC 1.6 Zetec 3 door, May 2002, delivery mileage only, £4,300 spent on disabled equipment incl push-pull hand controls, electric swivel seat, specially lightened power steering, adaption can be arranged. Genuine reason for sale, £14,995 ono. Tel Mr Tony Gibbs: 01488 682114 (Hungerford).

FIAT FIORINO, FULLY adapted for wheelchair user. Rear ramp access, 2 passenger seats plus driver MOT and tax. 1994 with 39k miles. Lightweight wheelchair and accessories included. Good all-round condition. £2,500 ono. Tel: 0191 483 4902.

ROLAC MANUAL RAMP from Ford Transit minibus. Good condition. £150 ono. Tel: 020 8698 9635.

OVERHEAD HOIST AND traverse system, 2 x Caricare 603, 1 x Caricare 602, 7m track with turntable, docking stations, battery charger and all fittings for full installation - cost £4,500+ (+VAT). Accept £2,950 - no VAT. Little used, - delivery and installation available, new October 2001. Tel: 01223 292493 (Cams).

- Wheelchairs/scooters

KUSCHALL ULTRA LIGHTWEIGHT wheelchair, 42 cms seat width, black/violet, 2 and a half years old. Very good condition, £600. Tel: 0151 423 3389.

POWER CHAIR MINI Jazzy, one year old, hardly used. As new, bargain five hundred pounds. Tel: 01707 653305.

WANTED: 16" POWERCHAIR part exchange for my 18" Powertec F40, bought recently for £900. Immaculate condition but unfortunately too wide. Tel: 020 8289 2055.

ELECTRIC SCOOTER SHOPRIDER, sovereign 888-4 in superb condition with basket & cover burgundy colour, tyres virtually new. Comes complete with electric mains charger £650. Call 0208 5050439 or 07989509377.

PRIDE CELEBRITY MOBILITY scooter XL, metallic red, 4 wheel with battery charger, will travel 20-25 miles per charge. With headrest, basket and ramps. As new, £1,000. Tel: 01787 310692.

LARK CLASSIC ROYALE indoor/Outdoor powered wheelchair. Gel batteries, charger, kerb climbers. Very good condition, £400 ono. Tel: 0141 956 3889 (evenngs).

NESBIT EVANS HARRIER electric wheelchair, kerb climbers, battery charger. Good condition. Over £4,000 new. £500 ono. Tel: 01784 740693 or mobile: 0778 9900022.

PRIDE JAZZY 1120 power chair. 2 years old. New batteries. Good working order. A rip on the seat. £880 ono. Fax: 01298 70727. Email: jazzysale@yahoo.co.uk

- Household/family

PREMIER 24 JET hydrotherapy walk-in bath. Never been used. Cost £5,200 new, will accept £1,500 ono. Also includes toilet and basin. Tel: 07721 445444.

FULL BODY MEDIMOTION exerciser. 18 months old, excellent condition. New, £3,500, will accept £2,000 ono. Tel: 020 8656 4004 (Croydon).

ACORN STAIR LIFT 120 de luxe straight track 123 inches long. Left hand platform for turn of stairs. Used six times only. Cost £2,000. Any reasonable offer considered. Buyer collects but already dismantled, owner lives in Harrow area. Tel: 01442 826440.

AUTOCHAIR PERSON LIFT, includes sling and brackets. Cost £1,500. Offers. Tel: 01952 250340.

AQUABILITY SIMPLICITY BATH, shell pink. Remote control safety seat. 2 years old. Cost £4,000 new, accept £900 ono. Tel: 01273 845248 (Home - evenings) 01273 403388 (Daytime - work) or 07799 472344 (mobile - all times).

MANGAR INTERNATIONAL HANDYBATHER, 2 months old, hardly used. The firm supplying the equipment guarantees a free demonstration/assessment and a free first service (excluding parts). £390 ono. Tel: 0121 440 3413.

GARAVENTA EXTERNAL STAIRLIFT available free from North London. Length 280cms, rise 1m. Email: dan@beyondgreen.net or tel: 020 7503 4060.

- Wanted

LEVO COMPACT WHEELCHAIR. Tel Julie: 01902 730538 (West Midlands).

SECOND HAND AUTO, Kangoo Berlingo or small vehicle adapted for wheelchair passenger. Tel: 0151 281 7334 (Liverpool).

- Help!

OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME! I am a 23yr old postgraduate student seeking a travel companion of similar age to accompany me on an around-the-world trip. As an independent wheelchair user, I will require a helping hand with travelling, transporting my chair and limited personal assistance. The trip is planned from January to August 2003 with a trial trip taking place during November. All travelling, accommodation and sight-seeing expenses will be paid along with a wage. I am looking for a male or female between the ages of 23-28 who I can develop a close friendship with and enjoy a fun and lively time on this opportunity of a lifetime!!! You must be reliable, confident, out-going, honest, caring and committed and able to drive. If you think you may be interested, contact Becki at rite2becki@aol.com Only genuine people need apply.

LINAGE ADVERTS

Due to lack of space on this issue, there is no linage form. To place a linage advert, please use the form in the August issue. Alternatively, contact Patrick Durham-Matthews: Tel: 020 7619 7320, E-mail: patrick.durhammatthews@scope.org.uk

- Holidays

Newlands Country House B&B, Suffolk
Purpose built grade 1 wheelchair accessible suites, 4 diamonds. All rooms en-suite, tv. Ample carparking. Nov – 4 nights for the price of 3 excluding Sats. For details tel: 01502 722164. www.newlands@southwold.com

Accessible Guest House In Llanberis Snowdonia
8 en-suite bedrooms, one fully adapted for wheelchair users. 3-star WTB, 4 diamonds AA. 500 yards from wheelchair-friendly mountain railway to Snowdon Summit. Plas Coch Guest House, High Street. 01286 872122. www.plas-coch.co.uk

ALGARVE - PORTUGAL
Lots of villas, farmhouses, bungalows, hotels, B&B, car hire with hand controls, adapted vans and plenty to see and do. Contact: David Player Tel: 00 351 289 393636 Fax: 00 351 289 397448 E-mail: dave@player.pt
www.player.pt

COSTA DEL SOL
Wheelchairs, Electric scooters, bath & WC seats, commodes and more for hire T: 01375 377246 F: 01375 405861 *MobilityAbroad*
www.mobilityabroad.co.uk

Brittany Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details **C. Hodgson. Tel (01924) 499220.**

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAY COTTAGE IN RURAL FRANCE
Charming cottage in Dordogne region available for rent. Reasonable rates. If you are looking for peace and quiet, warm weather, good food and wine, this is the place for you. Book now for 2002. Call or fax Ed Passant on **0208 885 4971** or e-mail: ed.passant@mail.com web: www.accessholidays.com

CUMBRIA Idyllic & peaceful beauty spot. The Tranquil Otter Lakeshore Lodges 5 cosy lodges (1 accessible), 2 luxury lodges (both accessible) with accessible sauna, whirlpool bath, log burner etc. Lakeside paths, lake (via wheely boat) and shop all accessible. Resident Otters. Own rowing boat. 01228 576661. www.the-tranquil-otter.co.uk

Willow Cottage – The Black Isle, 5 mins drive Inverness.
Beautifully equipped, Tourist Board 3 stars with Disability Award 2
1 double, 1 twin, both ensuite. Situated on a working croft amid lovely scenery with wildlife park close by. Moray Firth dolphins, kites, buzzards, deer etc, and our Nasseil! Inverness offers good food, cinema, theatre etc
Brochure/details, tel: 01463 731455, website: www.highlanddisabledcottageholidays.co.uk

- Events

APSLEY HOUSE
Wellington Museum
Apsley House 150th Anniversary Event – "Wellington at No1" 10-15 September 2002
A week of events celebrating the life of the great Duke of Wellington. Talks, tours and activities for all ages. For further details 020 7499 5676
Free entry for all 14-15 September. Includes BSL interpreted events.

SEND US YOUR SMALLS...

...and make a big impression. Small ads in DN reach over 70,000 people for just £6 a line. All small ads must be paid for in advance. If you want to advertise, please use the form provided. Send it with a cheque for the total to Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

10 MINUTES FROM DISNEYLAND

Florida villa owned by paraplegic. Sleeps up to 12. fully accessible and large. King size bed with ensuite bathroom. wc and wheel-in shower. Large pool with water operated seat for a disabled person. A holiday you can take with confidence. Contact John Gillett on: 01179 698770.

ROYAL DEESIDE SCOTLAND
NEW for 2002. 4 superb self catering cottages located on the banks of the river next to Balmoral. Designed and equipped to the highest standard with state of the art facilities for people with disabilities, their families and friends. Please contact: CRATHIE OPPORTUNITY HOLIDAYS Tel: 013397 42100 for more details or email: info@crathieholidays.org.uk www.crathieholidays.org.uk

ODDICOMBE HALL HOTEL
Provides an excellent holiday for the disabled person and their family. We have full disabled facilities and are able to cater for organised parties. All wheelchair accessible rooms open on to a private garden with conservatory and have breathtaking sea views. Private car park with unloading at entrance to the hotel. Open all year. Why not escape and relax at delightful Babbacombe, Torquay? Category 2. Special 3-4 day breaks Nov-April. Discount for group bookings. Tel: (01803) 313457.

Norfolk, Nar Valley Holiday Cottages
3 self-catering, all wheelchair accessible, 1 with wheel-in shower room, 2 with airbaths. Mostly en-suite. On working farm - peaceful location, central for beaches and tourist attractions. Indoor heated swimming pool. Also B&B. **More details and prices, contact: Rosemary on 01760 338797.**

BIRCHAM, WEST NORFOLK Coast 5 miles. Two F.C.H disabled-friendly holiday cottages designed with wheelchair users and their families in mind. One sleeps 4 and one sleeps up to eight. Both have wheel-in shower rooms. Equipped to the highest standard. TV, linen and electricity Inc. Smokers and dogs welcome. For further details please telephone **01485 578603** or visit www.norfolkdisabled-friendlycottages.co.uk

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "Holiday Care Award Winners"
Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service. Please ring or write for colour brochure **R&N Hall, Penrose Burden, St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin (01208) 850277 or 850617**

• Recruitment (on pages 42 to 46)
Harrow
**Association
of
Disabled people**
Advice Director

Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD) is a well-developed local organisation providing a wide range of services to disabled people. We are looking for a committed person for the position of Advice Director.

- Salary from £27,300 (including LWA) for 35 hours per week
 - You must have proven experience of management, demonstrating the skills required to develop and expand our Advice Services, with experience of working with the diverse partners that make up a typical London local community, and a sound knowledge of Advocacy, Law Centre services, disability issues and legislation and display a clear commitment to equal opportunities.
- You will be responsible for developing and expanding our services across North and West London; you will be creative and able to react quickly to take advantage of situations.
- This will be a challenging post with an opportunity to make a significant difference to disabled people and you will be helping to improve the quality of life for all disabled people in the UK.

For an application pack, please contact HAD by Tel: **020 8861 9920**, Fax: **020 8861 9921**, Minicom: **020 8861 4547**, E-mail: **n.washer@had.org.uk**. Visit our web site at **www.had.org.uk** or write to HAD, 2nd Floor, Premier House, 1 Canning Road, Wealdstone, Harrow, HA3 7TS.

We welcome applications from all parts of the community.

Closing date for applications: **7th October 2002**

Interviews: week commencing: **21st October 2002**

Registered Charity No. 1080505

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**Paid Work Placement Opportunities
for People with Disabilities**
BBC Extend...

...is an annual scheme, which offers appropriately qualified disabled people a great opportunity to gain 16 weeks, paid work placement within the BBC.

Commencing in November 2002...

...placements are available across the UK - including London, Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Cardiff, Glasgow and Belfast. Placements on offer include **Broadcast Assistants, Researchers, Operators, Copywriters, Web Developers/Assistants, Finance Assistants, HR Advisers, Administrators** and many more.

As well as matching criteria for individual placement...

...you will need to demonstrate interest in broadcasting and knowledge of BBC output. Excellent interpersonal, communication and team working skills are essential.

Ref. 55547/DI

Candidates will have to undergo a selection process. Please note that only people with disabilities will be considered for these placements.

For further details and an application form, contact **BBC Recruitment Services** before 18 September (quote ref: 55547/DI and give your name and address). Tel: 0870 333 1330. Textphone: 020 7765 1192. PO Box 10670, London W1A 6GN. E-mail: **recruitment@bbc.co.uk** Online: **www.bbc.co.uk/jobs/e55547.shtml** Ceefax page 696.

Completed forms to be returned by **20 September** (strict deadline).


Volunteer Centre Tameside

(Reg Charity No: 514804)

VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT WORKER WITH DISABLED PEOPLE

APT&C Scale 6 pt26 (£17,823 p.a.), based in Ashton-under-Lyne, 36hrs per week
Fixed term contract until 31st March 2005

The post-holder will work with volunteers and volunteer recruiting organisations, raising disability awareness, enabling disabled people to take full advantage of the opportunities offered through volunteering. **Disabled people only may apply.**

In this instance we define the term disabled as people with physical or sensory impairments, learning difficulties or mental health system users/survivors.

Closing date: **9 Sept 2002**

Interview date: **19 Sept 2002**

For Application Pack write to:
Recruitment, Volunteer Centre Tameside, 95-97 Penny Meadow, Ashton-u-Lyne OL6 6EP.
Or e-mail: **office@tamesidevb.org.uk**

Volunteer Centre Tameside is striving towards becoming an Equal Opportunities Organisation.

COURSES: To advertise your vacancies or courses please contact Richard, tel: 020 7619 7336, or Patrick, tel: 020 7619 7320, or contact them both on fax: 020 7619 7331, minicom: 020 7619 7332. They can go on the web as well!

Tower Hamlets is a distinctive, unique London Borough that is home to a diverse vibrant, multicultural community. As part of an exciting regeneration programme, we aim to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the area. It's also an ideal opportunity to further your career.

Social Services
Resource Centre Worker - Nightshift

RSW3 £16,410 - £17,988 Plus enhancements.

The newly re-configured Disabilities Resource Centre for Adults at Southern Grove, near Mile-End Station, has an Information/Advice Service, a Café with Internet access, a nine-bed short-stay residential Unit with assessment, emergency, and respite facilities, and a Day Opportunities Service. Also housed within the Resource Centre are the Physical and Sensory Disabilities Care Management Teams, the Disability Advocacy Network and a number of other Voluntary Groups.

The Resource Centre Worker - Nightshift Post covers the short-stay residential Unit, and is one of four permanent Posts that operate on a rota with two waking nightshift workers per night.

As over 50% of those using the assessment, emergency, and respite facilities are likely to be from the Bangladeshi Community a Resource Centre Worker - Nightshift is required, whose cultural background, life experience, and language ability enable them to relate and communicate appropriately with the majority of those accessing the residential facilities.

There is back-up support each night from Assistant Managers on sleep-in duties.

This is a job with great variety in a new, exciting, and vibrant Service with lots of peer group support.

Ref: **9805AUG018**

These posts are advertised under Section 5(2)(d) of the Race Relations Act.

Closing date: 20 September 2002.

For an application pack, please call 020 7364 4488 (24 Hour Recruitment Line). A special Minicom service is available for those with a hearing or speech impairment on 020 7364 4489.

We shall ensure fairness and equal opportunities throughout our workforce and in service delivery. We welcome applications from suitably skilled candidates regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or age.

A Workforce to Reflect the Community, Committed to Positive Action.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

• For sale (cont'd pg 43)

Powerchairs Mobility Consultants
New and Nearly New, Electric Wheelchairs,
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All models wanted and for sale.
Ring Free anytime
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All major credit cards accepted

**Accessible Vehicle
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01202 814112
adam.price@lineone.net

• Courses
Appropriate Paper-based Technology

Weekend Taster: Making furniture, toys and household items from paper and cardboard! Creative courses. Accessible.

4-6 October & 1-3 November 02.

Contact: Jean Westmacott People Potential
01420 563 741. Website: **www.apbt.org.uk**

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DN is not responsible for claims made in the adverts it prints. Readers are advised to check claims with advertisers before relying on them.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES FOR SALE

2000 X Mercedes Vito 113 , fully loaded & lift, 2,600 miles	£20,750
2000 X Ford Courier TD , Universal Mobility, 6,500 miles	£10,500
2000 W Suzuki Wagon R Liberty , 1 owner, 28,000 miles	£8,250
1999 V VW 1.9 TD Cruiser , 29,000 miles, 1 owner	£9,995
1999 T Voyager 3.3 Auto Chairman , 1 owner, 28,000 miles	£TBA
1999 T VW 2.5 TD LWB , Hi-Top, 17,000 miles, 1 owner, side lift & Aircon	£13,995
1999 T Renault Trafic Versa 1.9D , 12,000 miles	£9,500
1998 S Daihatsu Mobility , 6,000 miles ramps & winch	£4,995
1998 S Ford Courier Universal , 32,000 miles, winch	£8,495
1998 R Mercedes Vito Chairman , 113 Auto, 40,000 miles	£12,500
1997 P Sharan Carat TD Automotive , 1 owner, 20,000 miles	£13,750
1996 P Transit Auto Diesel , P.A.S. 1 owner, remote doors & lift	£9,750
1996 P Trafic Diesel , 1 owner, 5,000 miles captain chair	£7,750
1996 P Trafic LWB , hi-top, day camper, tail lift, 19,000 miles	£9,500
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1996 N Transit , Semi Hi Roof. Tail lift, 24,000 miles	£8,750
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Kangoo & Berlingo models	Choice of 5
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Trafic & Vanette Cargo models	Choice of 7

A selection of 40 WAVs from £2,750 fully serviced with warranty. Demo and delivery anywhere in UK mainland free. Part exchange and vehicles sought for purchase.

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Mercedes Vito 108Cdi , 2001 '01, 6K miles, Orchid Green WAV, lowered at floor rear entrance with ramp, Unwin Solo wheelchair & passenger restraints.	
VW Transporter SWB 1.9TD '95 M , Green, WAV Conversion, 4 Pass Driver & Wheelchair.	£8,975
Fiat Ulysse 2.0EL , R reg, 50k miles. Lowered floor with ramp. Driver 3 Pass + Wheelchair, PAS, twin sunroofs, climate control & electric windows.	£10,995
VW Sharan S 2.0 Petrol , 1999, T Red, 19k miles, 5 seater with lowered floor at rear & fixed ramp.	£13,495
VW Transporter 800S 1.9TD , 1998 S, Red, 49k miles, Lewis Reed WAV Conversion.	£8,995
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All the above vehicles come with our Comprehensive Used Vehicle Warranty

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Tel: (01334) 657722, fax: (01334) 657711,
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website: **www.gleneaglesconversions.co.uk**

Gleneagles
Conversions Ltd

• Recruitment (on pages 42 to 46)

Gateshead Council www.gateshead.gov.uk

LEARNING AND CULTURE
Libraries, Arts and Information

Gateshead Council's Libraries, Arts and Information Service provides an excellent service, recognised by the award of a Charter Mark and a 3 Star Best Value review. The service has a national reputation for the high quality socially inclusive services that have been developed for people with a sensory impairment.

Information Manager - Social Inclusion
PO1 £22,341 - £24,072, 37 hpw Ref: LCLA26

We are looking for an experienced manager to develop these library and information services further. You should have experience of developing, managing and promoting services to socially excluded people. Experience of managing transcription services and the delivery of a talking newspaper would be particularly relevant.

You should have expert knowledge of the information needs of sensory impaired people and experience of working with community groups to develop services. You should have a working knowledge of relevant legislation, especially the impact of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Information Assistant - Braille
Scale 4 £13,764 - £15,342 pro rata, 18 1/2 hpw Ref: LCLA27

We are now looking for a person to help us to further develop our library and information services for visually impaired users.

You will also contribute to our Braille transcription services and must be able to use a Perkins brailier, read braille and have word processing skills.


If successful for both posts, you will have to apply for a standard Disclosure.

Application forms and further details are available from the Strategic Director, Human Resources, Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH. Tel: (0191) 433 3847 or 433 2244. You should return your form to the Strategic Director, Human Resources. Application forms and additional information is also available in Braille, large print and audio cassette.

Closing date: 13 September 2002.

The Council is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from candidates of any age, disability, marital status, race or sex. This Council operates a no smoking policy. Applicants with disabilities will be invited for interview if the essential job criteria are met.

www.sector1.net for more vacancies within this organisation.



Camden NHS
Primary Care Trust

Sexual Health Facilitator
Disabled Young People
Grade A&C 7 or Grade G
£26,430-£30,479 p.a. inc. pro rata
3 days per week
18 month fixed term contract
Ref: CP/5HFA

This is an exciting opportunity for someone who has experience of working with young people.

The main function of the post is to work closely with other agencies including education and school nursing to identify the sexual health needs of disabled young people both in mainstream and special schools.

You will develop resources, participate in policy development and ensure that the sexual health needs of disabled young people become part of mainstream service provision. You will also provide 1:1 counselling and support working closely with the sexual health education team.

For further information, please contact Sarah Raynor on 020 7530 3986.

Application forms and job packs are available from the Recruitment Department, St Pancras Hospital, 4 St Pancras Way, London NW1 0PE.
Tel: 020 7530 5327/3118 (24 hour voicemail) quoting above reference number.
Closing date: 13th September 2002.

Interviews will take place week commencing 30th September 2002.

We are an employer committed to Equal Opportunities with a range of family friendly policies. The Trust operates a no smoking policy.

advice that makes a difference

Physical Disability Form Filling Project Co-ordinator

Salary: SO2 Sp 32 £24,348 (increase pending)
Hours: 37.5 per week, full - time
Fixed Term Contract until 31 March 2005

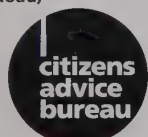
We have been funded by the Government Office for London - Active Community Unit, to employ a physically disabled person as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. We are seeking a dynamic person with the ability to establish and co-ordinate a form filling project for physically disabled people in Westminster.

Previous experience is not required and full NACAB training is available. We are working in partnership with Leonard Cheshire.

For an application pack please send an A4 (57p) SAE to Mo Butler, Westminster CAB Service, Westminster Council House, 97-113 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5PT.

Closing date: 20 September 2002.
Interviews: 30 September 2002.

We are committed to working to achieve equal opportunities for all groups subject to discrimination.



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IT'S NORMAL TO BE DIFFERENT

Disability Co-ordinator

2 year fixed term appointment or secondment - London or Sheffield

Starting Salary: £27,906 (London) £24,866 (out of London)
Plus benefits (pay award pending)

The Department for Education and Skills is passionate about developing a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve and valuing the contribution of everyone in our organisation.

This is a new post which will strengthen the way we make adjustments for people with disabilities in the Department. The Disability Co-ordinator will be the main contact point for people with disabilities, providing advice and support and agreeing and co-ordinating the adjustments they need. You will have a key role in raising the profile of disability issues in the Department.

Able to act on your own authority, you will have a good knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act and a track record of identifying and tackling barriers for people with disabilities. You will be able to develop and maintain effective working relationships with a wide range of people; have excellent influencing and negotiating skills; and be a strong change manager with a creative approach who is willing to challenge existing ways of working and find innovative ways to generate interest in disability issues. You will also manage the budget for adjustments.

You can apply on a full time, part time or job share basis.

To find out more and download an application, visit our website at www.dfes.gov.uk/recruitment or email your full postal address to recruitment.team@dfes.gsi.gov.uk or contact the Recruitment Team on 01928 794715. You can also contact the Recruitment Team by minicom on 01928 794704.

Alternative methods of application are available (large print, Braille audio). Please contact the Recruitment Team to discuss any special needs you may have.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is 25 September 2002.

The Department for Education and Skills is an Equal Opportunities employer committed to Equal Opportunities policies. We think you will be surprised at the diversity of our people and our business.

department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence



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City of
Salford

• For sale (cont'd)

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Automatic 2001 Y Reg. Constables retracting wheelchair and lift passenger side. 1,800 miles, one owner. Silver with taupe leather interior. Air conditioning, electric windows, radio/cassette/cd, alarm, alloy wheels. Manufacturer's warranty until June 2004. Seats 5 plus wheelchair passenger. Chrysler main dealer facilities, licensed credit brokers. Cost over £30,000. £19,995. Tel: 01223 411114 Gareth – Marshall Motor Group.

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COMMISSIONERS FOR THE DISABILITY RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions invites applications from suitably qualified candidates to fill five Commissioner (non-executive director) vacancies due to arise in April 2003 on the Board of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC).

The DRC is an independent statutory body, established by the DRC Act 1999 and sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions, to work towards the elimination of discrimination against disabled people.

Applicants will have:

- a sound understanding of and commitment to disability equality;
- the capacity to operate immediately as a Board member at national level;
- a demonstrable profile and record of achievement within their profession and/or area of work;
- excellent interpersonal and communication skills; and
- strong links with one or more of the DRC's main stakeholder groups: large and small employers and service providers and their representative organisations, the public sector, and the voluntary sector including organisations of and for disabled people.

Applicants will be expected to spend at least 20 days a year on Commission business. They will receive a daily fee (presently set at £138) and payment for travel and other expenses.

Applications are particularly welcome from disabled people, women and members of minority ethnic groups and from those with a business or trade union background.

For further information and an application form, please send a postcard bearing your name, address and reference B6696 to: Debbie Mead, Section 3, Capita RAS, Innovation Court, New Street, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 7JB.

Alternatively you can ring: 01325 745791 (24hrs), or e-mail: debbie.mead@capita.co.uk or for deaf and hearing impaired people text telephone: 01325 745793. You can also visit the Capita RAS website at www.capitaras.co.uk to request or download a recruitment pack.

A copy of this advertisement and the recruitment pack are available on request in Braille, on audio tape, in large print and in Welsh.

COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS SHOULD BE RETURNED BY FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER 2002.

The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to making appointments on merit by fair and open processes, taking account of equal opportunities.



DWP

Department for
Work and Pensions

CAPITA RAS
PUBLIC SECTOR RESOURCING

SCOPE is a national disability organisation whose aim is that disabled people achieve equality. The internal communications team plays a key role in achieving this aim and is seeking motivated individuals to work in this challenging and extremely rewarding environment.

SCOPE
1952-2002
FIFTY YEARS

SCOPE's aim is that disabled people achieve equality. The internal communications team plays a key role in achieving this aim and is seeking motivated individuals to work in this challenging and extremely rewarding environment.

Internal Communications Officer

£25,876 (subject to evaluation) including inner London weighting, London N7
A motivated individual is required to facilitate the strategic management of internal communications within Scope. With a huge amount of imagination and creativity you will use your skills to research and write communications plans, develop communications plans, measure the success of our communication activities and develop and maintain relationships with our diverse internal audience.

You must have excellent oral and written communication skills, a good understanding of project management and the confidence to communicate with all levels.

Intranet Editor

£24,764 (subject to evaluation) including inner London weighting, London N7
Following a recent intranet pilot project within Scope, an experienced Intranet Editor is required to research and measure the success of the pilot and ensure that all future developments are well-researched, planned, appropriately designed, implemented and promoted. With excellent oral and written communication skills you will also research, write and edit copy and be responsible for a publishing strategy.

You must have first-hand experience of managing an intranet and an understanding of the importance of usability and navigation best-practice. Knowledge of web technologies is essential as are excellent project management skills.

For an application pack (no CVs please) telephone John Southgate on 020 7619 7390.

Closing date for both posts is Friday 6th September 2002.

We are committed to equal opportunities and we encourage applications from disabled people.

Find out more about us at www.scope.org.uk

Registered charity no 208231

Exert your influence at the highest levels of Government

dti
Department of Trade and Industry

Director - Women and Equality Unit

c. £80,000

London based

The DTI's goal is 'Prosperity for All' - working with business, employees and consumers to drive up productivity and competitiveness. It strives for a modern Britain that uses and fosters the talents of all its people and recognises diversity as a source of competitive advantage. The WEU reports to Patricia Hewitt and Barbara Roche as Ministers for Women. It is tasked with ensuring women's concerns are at the heart of Government policy making and that they have every opportunity to contribute to and benefit from prosperity. The Unit is also responsible for co-ordinating the equality agenda across Whitehall, including a major project to review the existing arrangements for supporting equality.

We are now looking for someone with first-class leadership skills to become the Unit's Director and to be accountable to the Ministers for Women, Patricia Hewitt and Barbara Roche. The Unit comprises 70+ staff, has a budget of £10m and sponsorship responsibility for the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Women's National Commission.

You will be responsible for advising at the highest levels on strategic direction and outcomes and for ensuring the successful delivery of current projects which include supporting flexible working, closing the pay gap, and increasing the representation of women in public life. To be successful, you will need to work closely with Ministers and officials across Whitehall as well as NGOs, business and

employee representatives and the academic community. You will also be expected to represent the UK on women's and equality issues internationally, both within the European Union and at the United Nations.

Whether your background is in the private, public or voluntary sector, you will need to demonstrate a commitment to diversity, a proven track record of delivering measurable outcomes through partnership development, and an understanding of the Government's equality agenda. In addition, your ability to think strategically should be matched by a flair for developing policy on the basis of evidence and user perspectives and by the confidence to initiate change, the determination to make things happen and the organisational skills to manage complex and interlocking projects. You will also need to be an experienced people manager with strong influencing and representational skills.

The appointment will be for an initial fixed-term period of two years with the possibility of extension or permanency. A salary of c. £80,000 is offered, dependent on qualifications and experience, together with a non-contributory pension scheme and six weeks' annual holiday. There may also be the opportunity for secondment.

The DTI is an equal opportunities employer and aims to reflect the diversity of British society. All applications are welcome regardless of gender, race, disability or sexuality.

For further information and an application form, please contact Capita RAS, Innovation Court, New Street, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 7JB. Tel: 01325 745170 (24 hours). Fax: 01256 383787. Internet: www.capitaras.co.uk

Please quote reference B6731. Closing date for applications is 17th September 2002.

CAPITA RAS
www.capitaras.co.uk



• Recruitment (on pages 42 to 46)

Tower Hamlets is a distinctive, unique London Borough that is home to a diverse vibrant, multicultural community. As part of an exciting regeneration programme, we aim to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the area. It's also an ideal opportunity to further your career.

Social Services

Rehabilitation Officer

£24,345 - £25,617

The newly re-configured Disabilities Resource Centre for Adults at Southern Grove, near Mile-End Station, has an Information/Advice Service, a Café with Internet access, a nine-bed short-stay residential Unit with assessment, emergency, and respite facilities, and a Day Opportunities Service. Also housed within the Resource Centre are the Physical and Sensory Disabilities Care Management Teams, the Disability Advocacy Network and a number of other Voluntary Groups. A multi-purpose room with a kitchen, lounge, and small office has been furnished and decorated by "Seeability" with colours and textures appropriate to those with a visual impairment.

The Sensory Disabilities Team require a qualified Rehabilitation Officer to undertake Assessments and provide rehabilitation services to people with visual impairment in the Borough. You should be enthusiastic, insightful, and keen to join a progressive Team where you can put new ideas into practice. You will work alongside a second Rehabilitation Officer, Assessment and Review Officer (Hearing Impairment), Care Manager, Social Worker, Senior Practitioner (Dual Sensory Loss), Admin. Officer and the Team Manager, in a supportive and motivated Team.

As over 50% of those accessing services provided by the Team are from the Bangladeshi Community the Rehabilitation Officer will require to have a cultural background, life experience, and language ability that will enable them to relate and communicate appropriately with the majority of users of services.

This is a job with great variety in a Team that is central to user-led developments at the Resource Centre.

Ref: 9805AUG019

These posts are advertised under Section 5(2)(d) of the Race Relations Act.

Closing date: 20 September 2002.

For an application pack, please call 020 7364 4488 (24 Hour Recruitment Line). A special Minicom service is available for those with a hearing or speech impairment on 020 7364 4489.

We shall ensure fairness and equal opportunities throughout our workforce and in service delivery. We welcome applications from suitably skilled candidates regardless of ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or age.

A Workforce to Reflect the Community, Committed to Positive Action.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Access Officer

£11,553 to £12,189 p.a. for 18 hours per week (pay award pending)

Our Corporate commitment is to help create the best opportunities, services and environment for the people of the Royal Borough of Kingston.

In keeping with this broad vision we are now seeking to recruit an enthusiastic, self-motivated part-time Access Officer. This is a new post and offers a challenging opportunity to make a real difference in promoting a convenient and accessible environment for the whole community, and particularly for people with disabilities.

Based in the Council's Building Control Services team, you will have a working knowledge of the legislation that seeks to secure improved access and facilities for people with physical or sensory impairment. You must have direct experience of disability issues, be capable of interpreting plans and specifications of work and have the ability to explain problems and solutions to both professionals and lay people alike.

You may also be required to undertake access surveys/audits of land and buildings and produce written reports identifying deficiencies together with recommendations for improved access provision.

You will be expected to work with the minimum of supervision and be able to prioritise your own workload. You will possess excellent communication and presentation skills.

Normal working hours will be by arrangement although you will be expected to work out of hours to attend evening meetings etc. on an occasional basis.

For an informal discussion about this post please contact Chris Ireland, Principal Building Control Surveyor on 020 8547 4700.

Application details can be viewed on www.jobsgopublic.com
Alternatively forms and further details are available from the Recruitment Office, Room 235, Guildhall 2, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1EU.

Telephone 020 8547 4601 (24 hour recruitment line).

Website: <http://www.kingston.gov.uk>

Please quote vacancy reference: 352035.

Minicom users only 020 8547 5162.

Closing date: 13 September 2002.

Interview date: 27 September 2002.

All full time positions are open to job share applications unless otherwise indicated

An equal opportunities employer



Disability Action Waltham Forest

Are you clued up on Direct Payments and all its relevant issues?

Do you have project management experience and are capable of being self motivated?

Have you experience of successfully advocating on behalf of others?

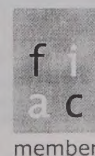
Want to set up a new office and be in at the start?

REDBRIDGE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROJECT is looking for someone like you to work as Project Leader. At first you will be based in Walthamstow while looking for premises in Redbridge. You will need to have a working knowledge of the legislation around Independent Living, experience of servicing meetings, excellent communication skills and would have delivered advice and advocacy within a multi cultural environment.

Salary is £21,840 pa incl. Outer London Weighting (scp.30) for a 36 hour week. Holidays – 28 days per year.

For an application pack contact: Pat Bhabha, Disability Action WF, 1A Warner Road, Walthamstow, E17 7DY. Tel: 020 8509 0812, Minicom 020 8521 4287.

Closing date: Friday 27th September 2002.



All disabled applicants meeting the essential criteria will be interviewed.



OPPORTUNITIES AS DIVERSE AS OUR PEOPLE.

With over 80 different career paths on offer at the Ministry of Defence, few organisations are able to offer such a diverse range of opportunities – and these are open to everyone.

To find out more, visit our website: www.jobs.mod.uk or email: jobs.mod@gtnet.gov.uk

The MOD is an equal opportunities employer.



MOD-RECRUITMENT



We are looking for several new Board members to join us at a challenging time for the Foundation. All applications will be welcome, however we are particularly interested in applicants with knowledge of disability policy and issues, NHS policy development, public service funding bids, accounting and Charity Law. We would welcome applications from people with disabilities, women and ethnic minorities and those interested in helping us develop our new activities in London. Our new activated Trading Subsidiary is also looking for Board members to take forward its commercial activities.

A commitment to attend 8 Board meetings a year at our Exeter premises is required.

For an informal discussion and further information please telephone 01392 286219. Expressions of interest and CV by 20th September 2002 to Mrs Sarah Tadd, Company Secretary, St Loye's Foundation, Fairfield House, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 6EP.

St Loye's Foundation is a registered charity whose objects are to provide for the rehabilitation of people with disabilities and to teach occupational therapy and related skills. We have prided ourselves in providing high quality and effective training to our students since 1937.

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Introduction Agency

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A member of ABIA

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Able-bodied or Disabled

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Tel/Fax: Int' 00+44+ or UK (0)1606 49093

DEADLINES

October 2002 classified deadlines: Booking: 13 Sept. Copy: 17 Sept.



SCOPE

A VISION OF EQUALITY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Package in excess of £100k - London

We are a national disability organisation whose focus is people with cerebral palsy. We are celebrating our 50th anniversary this year but still have a huge agenda to achieve our vision of equality for disabled people: a society in which they are as valued, and have the same human and civil rights, as everyone else.

Richard Brewster, our current Chief Executive, is leaving to explore a career in the United States. This opens up a rare opportunity for a committed individual to take over the leadership task - delivering our current 5 year plan and preparing the ground for our future vision in consultation with our users and stakeholders.

Beverley Steel,
Veredus Executive Resourcing,
Plumtree Court, London EC4A 4HT
Email: beverley.steel@veredus.co.uk

www.veredus.co.uk

A part of The Capita Group Plc

You already have a track record of successful delivery in a complex environment and are achieving results through others. You are a strong and collaborative manager with the ability to encourage those around you to think laterally, developing original concepts and ideas. You must be an inspirational and motivational communicator able to persuade and influence a range of audiences internally and externally. You will be sensitive to the needs of a user led and democratic organisation and be comfortable working within a political context.

Your current background is not the issue. Above all you will have a genuine empathy with our vision and be

driven by a desire to address the imbalance that disabled people currently face.

If you feel motivated by this opportunity, we invite you to visit our advisors' website www.veredus.co.uk where you can download the information pack or call their 24 hour information line on 020 7212 6535 quoting reference number 5155.

For an informal and confidential discussion please call our advisors at Veredus - Beverley Steel on 020 7804 4459 or Jo Bunt on 020 7212 6302. Closing date is 30th September 2002.

VEREDUS
executive resourcing

NEWCASTLE DISABILITY FORUM (NDF)

Disability Access Information Officer

c £25k (18 month contract - possible extension)

This new role will ensure that regeneration initiatives across the city encompass a wide range of disability perspectives and needs, and that disabled people gain maximum access to buildings and services. The officer will recruit / co-ordinate volunteers to support this work, involving liaison with cross-sector organisations. Excellent relationship-building, communication, advocacy, good planning and organisational skills are essential. For more information, including a person specification, contact Karen Greenacre, NDF, The Dene Centre, Castles Farm Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 1PH, tel **0191 285 4556**, fax **0191 284 5313**, email info@ndf.org.uk

Closing date for CV applications **21st September**

Do you want to help raise the standards of nursing, midwifery and health visiting?

We are looking for people who can bring their creative ideas and enthusiasm to the work of the Council as co-opted members of its committees or as part of a reference panel. In particular we are seeking people who have specific expertise and experience as patients, users or carers, and people who employ nurses, midwives and health visitors.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council is the statutory regulatory body for nursing, midwifery and health visiting. Its key duties in protecting the public include setting standards for education, practice, conduct and competence for the professions, and responding to complaints about the fitness to practise of individual nurses, midwives or health visitors.

Committee membership: we are seeking 3 co-opted members for the Standards Committee and 3 for the Midwifery Committee to work alongside current members who bring expertise in nursing, midwifery and health visiting practice and education, and the client/patient perspective. Committees meet 6 times a year with additional time commitments in contributing to the committee's work. An attendance allowance is paid (currently £260 per day) and expenses are reimbursed.

Reference panel: we wish to establish a panel of people who have a range of skills and backgrounds that will help shape the Council's work. You will use your expertise and networks in commenting and advising on proposals, policies and standards in advance of wider consultation. As this is a new venture it is difficult to indicate the time commitment, but will mainly involve giving your views on draft proposals sent to you and working in small 'virtual' groups on occasions. An attendance allowance may be available for some of this work and expenses will be reimbursed.

For further information please contact Susan Savage on 020 7333 6525 or e-mail at susan.savage@nmc-uk.org

For an information pack and application form please contact Lucy Parker on 020 7333 6544 or e-mail at lucy.parker@nmc-uk.org The packs are also available from the website at www.nmc-uk.org/cms/content/vacancies The closing date for applications is Friday 13 September 2002.

Nursing and Midwifery Council, 23 Portland Place, London W1B 1PZ

We welcome applications from ALL sections of the community.



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a key partner in the expansive Heart of Thames Gateway regeneration programme.

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Courtesy of Marks and Spencer this month, we've got 8 pretty, pink stationery kits (worth £5) that are guaranteed to get any little girl in the mood for letter writing. Presented in fun, handbag-style packaging, the set includes jotter pad, stickers, paper clips, notepaper and envelopes – a must for any style conscious scribbler! For the chance to win, complete and return the coupon, *above right*. For information on all Marks and Spencer products, visit www.marks-and-spencer.com

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For kids who want to get geared up for the new academic year, Borders UK is a one-stop shop for activities inside and outside the classroom.

The store offers a comprehensive selection of books, music, videos and stationery in a welcoming and accessible atmosphere. Complete the coupon provided and you'll be in with a chance of winning one of 2 vouchers (worth £25) to spend in store, on whatever you wish. For information on branches of Borders, visit their website: www.borders.co.uk



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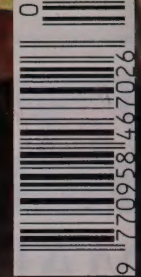
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